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THE  
HISTORY  
OF THE  
UNIVERSITY  
OF  
**Edinburgh;**

CHIEFLY  
COMPILED FROM ORIGINAL PAPERS AND RECORDS,  
NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED.

WITH AN APPENDIX CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF DIFFERENT  
INSTITUTIONS CONNECTED WITH THE UNIVERSITY.

BY  
ALEXANDER BOWER,  
AUTHOR OF THE LIFE OF LUTHER, &c.

VOL. III

EDINBURGH:  
PRINTED FOR WAUGH & INNES;  
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ALSO BY THE  
AUTHOR  
YIN YIN

TO THE HONOURABLE  
**LORD ROBERTSON,**  
LATE ONE OF THE LORDS OF COUNCIL AND SESSION,  
THIS CONCLUDING VOLUME OF THE  
**HISTORY**  
OF THE  
**UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH,**  
COMPRISING A PERIOD, DURING A GREAT PART OF WHICH  
HIS ILLUSTRIOUS FATHER,  
**PRINCIPAL ROBERTSON,**  
PRESIDED OVER THAT CELEBRATED INSTITUTION,  
WHEN IT WAS ADORNED BY NAMES THAT WILL LONG BE  
DISTINGUISHED FOR LITERATURE AND SCIENCE;  
IS,  
WITH A GRATEFUL SENSE OF HIS LORDSHIP'S KINDNESS  
ON MANY OCCASIONS,  
INSCRIBED BY  
HIS LORDSHIP'S MOST OBEDIENT SERVANT,  
**ALEXANDER BOWER.**

EDINBURGH, 1st *January* 1830.



## P R E F A C E.

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THE constitution of the University of Edinburgh materially differs from that of almost every similar establishment whether at home or abroad. Seminaries of learning, it is well known, existed in Europe from a very early period, and, in the dark ages, were places of great resort, especially to churchmen. They were generally Monastic institutions, founded by persons in affluence, or by some religious order, and were more particularly devoted to the service of the saint from whom they derived their name. Such an incorporation was sometimes called *Universitas*, but more frequently *Studium Generale*. Its doctors, masters, readers, and students, enjoyed very peculiar privileges, liberties, honours, and immunities, which were commonly defined minutely in a bull granted by the Pope. Among many other immunities the members were exempted from all taxes and burdens.

the great number of Universities trace

their origin to these establishments as to their source, and even such as were founded in more modern times, when particularly investigated, will be perceived to derive many of their regulations from the same original.

Besides affording the students an opportunity of improving in literature and science which was the publicly professed design, a great many subordinate regulations were introduced, which had more the appearance of making the corporation consist of a class of men as separate and distinct from ordinary men as it was possible. Thus it was the universal practice for the students to be lodged within the buildings of the College, and to receive their commons in the public hall, where all the society assembled, at set hours appointed by statute. It was argued that their moral conduct, or the propriety of their behaviour, was thus more under the observation of their superiors or masters, and that there was less difficulty and more probability of being successful in impressing upon the youth the necessity of the greatest diligence in their studies. The police or discipline of the University was also esteemed to be more efficient by its members living in comparative retirement from the busy haunts of men. For the attainment of this object, the students were required to wear gowns of a particular colour and fashion—stated periods were fixed by the statutes of many universities for administering discipline—stated hours for assembling

for prayers—a certain course of study was prescribed—and lastly, subscription to certain articles of religion as a test of orthodoxy was required.

The University of Edinburgh is the only institution in the Kingdom, that is not encumbered with any of these or similar embarrassments. It may be regarded as a public seminary, where the most ample instruction in literature and philosophy is to be obtained, and neither the professors individually, nor the Senatus Academicus as a body, in the least interfere with the order or course of study which any person who attends their lectures may choose to adopt. The student is left to consult his own discretion or that of his friends. All that is required is, that before taking any degree, he must have attended certain classes prescribed by the statutes of the University, and submit to be examined on the proficiency he may appear to have made.

No oaths, subscriptions, nor tests of any kind, are required of students at their admission to the University, nor during any stage of their course; so careful have its founders been to grant to the members the most unlimited liberty in regard to religious opinion. The University of Edinburgh is the daughter of the reformation, and she has justified her illustrious descent, by teaching the grand principle of the subjection of reason to conscience alone, and her consequent freedom from every human yoke. For example, it is well known, that *the Society of Friends*

decline taking an oath. When gentlemen of that persuasion graduate as Physicians, they only make a declaration, and a particular form is prescribed for their accommodation.

The discipline of the College is as efficient as that of any similar society in Europe. Such is the unlimited permission granted in the most unqualified manner to gentlemen, to gratify their own taste, and so good a use has been made of this liberty, that an instance of the Patrons, or the *Senatus Academicus*, having occasion to interpose their authority, hardly occurs in the course of its whole history, which includes a period of very nearly two hundred and fifty years. The irregular methods which are used in some Universities, to avoid restraint, and to escape from bondage, are unknown in Edinburgh. The students wear no particular livery, are not to be distinguished on the street from the other inhabitants, and are at perfect liberty to mix with the citizens at all hours, as taste or inclination may prompt them. It is an undoubted fact, that at an early period in the history of some of the Scottish Universities, one or more of the Regents were in the practice, when the students lived within the College, to visit their rooms before nine o'clock in the evening, and again before five o'clock in the morning. This, however, was found to be exceedingly irksome both to the masters and scholars, and was, therefore, speedily abandoned. It is an arrangement also that can only

be carried into effect where the number of students is very small, but is utterly impossible when they amount, as in Edinburgh, to between two and three thousand.

I have now brought down the history of the University to the year 1829, so that this third volume completes what I originally proposed. Excepting a few additional professorships, little or nothing new has occurred in the arrangement of the studies, or the economy of the College. What is at present, therefore, laid before the public, chiefly consists of biographical notices of the eminent men, now deceased, who sustained the reputation of the seminary, some of whom were the principal Scottish literary and scientific characters of the last age. It may be sufficient to mention Robertson, Black, Blair, Hope, both Gregorys, Ferguson, D. Stewart, Robison, Playfair, Finlayson, Brown.

I have given an account of twenty-nine professors who have died since 1756, when the third volume commences. In regard to all of them, I procured access to original materials, calculated to render this department of the work highly interesting.

It being upwards of forty years since I entered the University, I was a pupil of, or known to most of them. But in order that no mistakes might be committed, and that the information which the work

contained, might be as authentic as possible, the different narratives were submitted to the near relations of those of whom an account is given, when they could be discovered.

I have enjoyed the same advantages in preparing the third volume with which I was favoured in the composition of the two former. The liberal and unlimited access to the Records of the University, and the Town Council of Edinburgh, the Patrons, has, in addition to the use of other important documents, given to the work a value and a sanction, which it could not otherwise have acquired. I have, in consequence, had the high gratification of finding, that it has been considered as a book of reference and authority by the Royal Commissioners, who have lately been occupied in an inquiry into the affairs of the University.

ALEXANDER BOWER.

*Edinburgh, 1st January, 1830.*

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DURING THAT PERIOD, MOST OF WHOM WERE THE PRINCIPAL LITERARY  
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## INTRODUCTION.

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IN the two former volumes of this work, the history of the University of Edinburgh is brought down from its first erection in 1582, to the year 1756.

At this period the Institution had attained not only a great extension of the branches of literature and science, as separately taught, but also high celebrity from the qualifications and fame of the Professors who filled the chairs. In particular, the Medical department had been distinguished by talents of the first order, and the foundation had been securely laid of that high reputation which the University has ever since maintained in this important branch of science.

In 1756 the number of Professors was nearly as great as at present, and their prelections included al-

most all the topics of philosophy and science which have since been allotted to separate classes.

These alterations and additions will be noticed in this volume in their order ; but as the University had then acquired a form and status little different from what it now possesses, and as those public political convulsions which had on different occasions affected its progress, had for some time been succeeded by the regularity of established government, its history must, from the above date, be of a more uniform nature, and will be most satisfactorily exhibited, in respect of the progress of science and other improvements which since that time so highly distinguished it, by an account of the characters and labours of the individuals, in the order of their respective appointments, who successively filled its official situations.

In this enumeration will be found a great proportion of the most illustrious names that have dignified and adorned the annals of the country ; but before proceeding to the narrative, it is proper, for the purpose of affording a correct view of the state of the University in the year 1756, to give a list of the Chairs and the Professors, which will show the degree of prosperity that the Institution, so truly "*ab exiguis profecta initiis*" had then attained.

The *Senatus Academicus* of the University of Edinburgh, in 1756, consisted of the following persons :

*Principal*—DR. JOHN GOLDIE.

I.—LITERATURE AND PHILOSOPHY.

*Humanity or Latin*—GEORGE STEWART.

*Greek*—ROBERT HUNTER.

*Mathematics*—MATTHEW STEWART.

*Logic*—JOHN STEVENSON.

*Moral Philosophy*—JAMES BALFOUR.

*Natural Philosophy*—JOHN STEWART.

II.—THEOLOGY.

*Divinity*—ROBERT HAMILTON.

*Ecclesiastical History*—PATRICK CUMMING.

*Hebrew*—JAMES ROBERTSON.

III.—LAW.

*Civil Law*—ROBERT DICK.

*Scots Law*—JOHN ERSKINE.

*Universal History and Public Law*—WILLIAM  
WALLACE.

IV.—MEDICINE.

*Practice of Medicine*—JOHN RUTHERFORD.

*Chemistry*—WILLIAM CULLEN.

*Theory of Physic*—ROBERT WHYTT.

*Anatomy*—ALEXANDER MONRO, Primus, and  
ALEXANDER MONRO, Secundus.

*Botany and Materia Medica*—CHARLES ALSTON.

*Midwifery*—ROBERT SMITH.

THE  
HISTORY  
OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH.

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VOL. III.

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CHAPTER I.

*Dr. Thomas Young, appointed Professor of Midwifery.—Dr. Adam Ferguson, Professor of Natural Philosophy, 1759—of Moral Philosophy, 1764.—Dr. Blair, Professor of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres.—Dr. Hope, Professor of Botany.*

DR. THOMAS YOUNG.

DR. THOMAS YOUNG, who was elected Professor of Midwifery upon the 18th February 1756, may be considered as the founder of this school in the University of Edinburgh. An account has been already given of the manner in which instruction was first communicated in Edinburgh in regard to the practice of it,\* but it was Dr. Young who first set the

\* Vid. vol. ii. p. 254, &c.

example of delivering a systematic course of lectures upon the subject; and instead of confining his attention to the education of females in this necessary branch of medical practice, he opened a class for the students at the University, and thus was the means of preventing it from being engrossed by a very ignorant and credulous set of practitioners. Being a well-educated man himself, and entertaining liberal ideas of his profession, he was indefatigable in his exertions to cherish the skill of the students of Midwifery, and to afford them every opportunity of attaining this, he gave public notice that patients should be delivered at their own houses free of expense, and were it necessary, should also be supplied with proper medicines. Not satisfied with what he considered to be so limited opportunities of improvement, he applied to the Managers of the Royal Infirmary for permission to fit up a ward for lying-in-women, and was successful. It is noticed in the following terms in the History of the Royal Infirmary, which was published by authority in the year 1778, p. 22.—“About this time (1756) a ward in the attic story of the Hospital, by the permission of the managers, but at Dr. Young’s expense, was fitted up for four lying-in-women, or as many more as Dr. Young could accommodate, each exceeding the number four, paying sixpence *per* day to the house.”

After Dr. Young had successfully taught the class for twenty-four years, he found it necessary to procure the assistance of a colleague; he therefore resigned his office upon the 25th October 1780, and the patrons, upon the subsequent 15th November elected him, and the late Dr. Alexander Hamilton,



conjunct Professors of Midwifery. The present Professor of Midwifery has paid a well-deserved tribute to the high merits of Dr. Young as a teacher, in his *Treatise on the Management of Female Complaints*, p. 166, &c.

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DR. ADAM FERGUSON.

A very considerable portion of the fame of the University of Edinburgh is to be referred to the appointment of Dr. Adam Ferguson to be one of the Professors. He was promoted to the chair of Natural Philosophy upon the 4th July 1759.

This distinguished philosopher and eloquent writer was a native of Perthshire. His father was minister of Logierait, in the presbytery of Dunkeld, about twenty English miles from Perth, and his mother was a lady from Aberdeenshire. Adam, who was named after his father, was the youngest of a numerous family, and was born about the year 1724. He received the rudiments of his education at the grammar school of the village of Logierait, of which the teacher at that time is represented to have been a man of abilities, and eminent for his attainments in classical literature. It was no rare occurrence in those days in Scotland for a person of these endowments to accept of the humble appointment of the laborious office of parish schoolmaster. The endeavours of the master were aided by the unwearied attentions of an affectionate father, who was himself an excellent scholar, and spared no pains in communicating instruction to a beloved child.

Mr. Ferguson's decided taste for literature very early discovered itself. His father, therefore, determined to afford him every opportunity of improvement which was within his power to procure; for this reason he sent him to Perth. The school of Perth was at that period in the highest reputation, and was taught by Mr. Martin, a gentleman distinguished for his accurate acquaintance with the Greek and Latin languages, and as a successful instructor of the youth. He was placed under his immediate care, and remained there for some time.

In 1739 he was sent to the University of St. Andrews; and was particularly recommended to the notice of Principal Tullidelph, who was well acquainted with his father. Here he became a candidate, for what, in the technical language of the Scottish colleges, is styled a bursary, or petty pension. The merit of the different competitors is ascertained by a comparative trial, which takes place at the commencement of each session. On this occasion, Mr. Ferguson acquitted himself with so great credit that he was the first on the list. His proficiency in the Latin language, to which the trial is confined, was even then considerable.

It is uncertain whether he had made any progress in Greek before he repaired to St. Andrews. During the first session, however, he entered with his accustomed ardour upon the study of this noble language. Being a bursar, or what is called *on the foundation*, both the classes and the years of attendance are prescribed by statute. His attention was for the first term, therefore, directed to the attainment of Greek, and cultivating a familiar ac-

quaintance with Latin. Though at this time he might be said only to have entered upon the prosecution of classical literature, yet he had tasted sufficiently of its charms to give him a decided preference for the studies connected with it. At the close of the session he returned to Logierait, and, with a perseverance which could not fail of success, set himself the daily task of reading with care one hundred lines of Homer, so that during the recess he had perused the whole Iliad. He went through the regular course of philosophy at this university.

In 1743, he repaired to Edinburgh, as it presented more opportunities of preferment, and a wider field for his ambition. At the commencement of the rebellion, Mr. Murray, brother to Lord Elibank, requiring a deputy to perform the duties of chaplain to the 42d regiment, he fixed on Mr. Ferguson. His not having attended the divinity hall for a sufficient number of years seemed to preclude his being ordained, which was then esteemed to be indispensable. This difficulty was, however, removed. When Mr. Murray retired from the service, Mr. Ferguson was appointed full regimental chaplain, and discharged the duties of the office for several years.

About this time, he applied for the living of Caputh in the gift of the Duke of Athol, but was unsuccessful. Apparently disgusted with the unsettled life which he had hitherto led, in 1757 he became private tutor in the family of the Earl of Bute, and two years afterwards, as has been mentioned, he was appointed professor of natural philosophy in the University of Edinburgh. He taught this class for five sessions. Upon Mr. Balfour's resigning the chair of

Moral Philosophy, he was appointed to succeed him. This took place 23d May 1764.

He published in the course of a very few years a pretty full synopsis of his lectures, and nearly about the same time (in 1767) the Essay on the history of Civil Society was sent to the press. This excellent treatise may be called the *histoire raisonnée* of man. It is a species of disquisition, which was first introduced by Montesquieu in the "Spirit of Laws," and has been successfully cultivated by many eminent philosophers. Mr. Ferguson traces the history of man from a state of barbarity to that of civilization and improvement. It added not a little to his fame. About this period also he was created LL. D. In the course of the same year, he married Miss Burnet, an amiable young lady from the shire of Aberdeen, and niece to Dr. Joseph Black.

In 1773 the patrons gave him leave of absence from his professional duties for a year and a half, and the late Earl of Chesterfield was entrusted to his care. He accompanied this young nobleman in a tour through the Continent of Europe. Meanwhile the seeds of the American War had taken deep root, and the opinions of the British nation were much divided respecting the contest. Dr. Price had published his far-famed work on Civil and Religious Liberty. Dr. Ferguson engaged in the controversy, and wrote an answer to it. In regard to fundamental principles there seems to have been very little difference. The answer certainly produced a considerable effect at the time, particularly upon the friends of administration, and it was the immediate mean of Dr. Ferguson himself crossing the Atlantic.

War between Britain and the Colonies had for some time raged with an unexampled degree of fury. Ministers talked as if nothing but the unconditional submission of rebellious subjects would satisfy them. The formidable opposition at home compelled them to lower their tone, and the disgraceful capitulation of the British Army, commanded by General Burgoyne, rendered the contest very unpopular. Early in 1778, it was therefore resolved to try the effect of conciliation. Five Commissioners were appointed to negotiate the business. These were, the Earl of Carlyle, Mr. William Eden, (afterwards Lord Auckland,) Lord Howe, and his brother General Howe. Dr. Ferguson was appointed Secretary to this commission. About the beginning of summer they proposed to commence the negociation. But they had been anticipated a month before this by Dr. Franklin, who had signed a treaty of alliance with the French. Dr. Ferguson had been appointed to notify the arrival of the ambassadors, and the subject of their mission, but was refused a passport to the seat of the American government. Finding a reconciliation utterly impracticable they withdrew.

Upon returning to his native country, Dr. Ferguson immediately resumed his labours, and was now enabled to finish a work which had long occupied his thoughts. This was "The History of the Progress and Termination of the Roman Republic." It was published in 1783, consisted of three quarto volumes, illustrated with maps, and was dedicated to His Majesty. At the advanced age of sixty-eight, he afterwards crossed the Alps with the intention of collecting in the libraries of modern Italy, materials for a

new edition, but the war with France obliged him to return.

In 1792 he published, in two quarto volumes, a retrospect of his Lectures, under the title of "Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy."

He had always been attached to a country life. Soon after his marriage he occupied a farm in the parish of Currie, in the vicinity of Edinburgh, which he took great pleasure in cultivating. He generally divided his time between that spot and the metropolis. He next removed with his family to a rural situation in the vicinity of Peebles, and at last repaired to St. Andrews, where he died in March 1816, in the ninety-third year of his age. Besides two daughters, he has left three sons, Sir Adam, keeper of the Regalia of Scotland—James and John.

Dr. Ferguson was tall, and in the prime of life possessed an elegant person, and had a great deal of colour. There is an excellent painting as well as a striking likeness of him, by Sir Joshua Reynolds, in the library of St. Andrews, presented by his family after his decease,—a copy of which, by Raeburn, is in the Professors' robing room in the University of Edinburgh.

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#### DR. HUGH BLAIR.

The Rev. Dr. Hugh Blair, was for many years a distinguished ornament of the University, and certainly contributed as much as any of his contemporaries, to the literary reputation which it has attained. He was a native of Edinburgh, and born in April

1718. His father held an office in the Excise, and, if we are not in a mistake, he was an only child. After going through a regular course at the High School of the city, he entered the University. Little is known of his early history. Having attended the literary classes; what was customary in those days, at the conclusion of the *curriculum*, he took the degree of A. M. Being designed for the church, he enrolled his name in the divinity hall, and having delivered the requisite discourses with approbation, he was proposed to the presbytery, as a candidate for licence to preach. We are not informed how long he continued a preacher; but it seems probable, that it was in 1742 he received a presentation from Mr. Johnstone of Lathrisk to the church of Colessie in the presbytery of Cupar and synod of Fife. Here he remained only for a short time, being translated to be one of the ministers of the Canongate of Edinburgh.

Previous to the building of the North Bridge, which was begun in 1763, and was the immediate cause of the city of Edinburgh being extended northwards, the Canongate might have been called (as it was before the union) the court end of the town. The most genteel and respectable families in the city inhabited it, and of course attended the parish church. It was here that Mr. Blair might be said to make his *debut*. He very soon attracted notice as a preacher, and his fame quickly spread. The correctness and elegance of his discourses from the pulpit were much admired. The magistrates of Edinburgh speedily gave him a presentation to Lady Yester's church, and in 1758, he was removed to the collegiate charge of the

High Church. A circumstance took place on this occasion, which deserves to be mentioned, as it showed the opinion of the public respecting the superiority of his talents as a preacher. It is well known, that until of late years, there were only two churches in the city, which were single charges. These were the New Grey Friars and Lady Yester's. The common practice was, upon a vacancy taking place in any of the collegiate charges, that the clergyman who had been first inducted to one of the single charges, was immediately preferred. Now, it so happened, that the late Rev. Mr. Lundie ought to have been promoted, if seniority as an Edinburgh minister were to be regarded. The popularity and high reputation of Mr. Blair, however, induced the town-council to make a new precedent, and passing over Mr. Lundie, they presented him.

About the same time, the University of St. Andrews conferred upon him the degree of Doctor in Divinity. He probably solicited this, with the view of its being a favourable introduction to what he seems to have early projected, delivering a course of Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres. He was appointed Professor of Rhetoric by the patrons, upon the 27th of June 1760. At the commencement of the session, he accordingly began his labours.

The reading a course of Lectures on the Belles Lettres, was not altogether a new idea in Edinburgh. The celebrated author of the *Wealth of Nations* had done so in 1748, and the following years, under the patronage of Lord Kames. What was Dr. Smith's success, seems to have been forgotten. But Dr. Blair was patronized by all persons of taste and li-



terature in Edinburgh. He entered upon the task with very favourable auspices. He was a professor in the University, and his fame as a preacher was no slender recommendation. He was generally known also as an elegant scholar, and as one who had paid great attention to the elements of criticism, and the principles of literary composition.

Having delivered two courses without any other emolument, than what he derived from the honoraries of his students, his lectures excited so great interest, that upon application being made to his Majesty he was induced to endow the professorship of Rhetoric, and Dr. Blair received his commission upon the 21st July, 1762, and was formally admitted upon the subsequent 4th August.

Macpherson had published the celebrated poems of Ossian, which have occasioned so much controversy. Dr. Blair vindicated their authenticity. A host of eminent critics, however, either doubted on the subject, or declared their disbelief. He published "A Critical Dissertation on the Poems of Ossian," and this was his first publication.—Whatever opinion may be formed of the matter in dispute, it cannot be denied that the Doctor has discovered great critical acumen, whilst at the sametime it affords an excellent specimen of very elegant composition.

In 1777 he transmitted to London the MS. of a volume of sermons, with the design of committing them to the press. The bookseller, after keeping it for some time, wrote a letter to him discouraging the publication. One of these sermons had been submitted to Dr. Johnson for his opinion, and after the unfavourable letter had been sent off, the bookseller re-

ceived a note from Johnson, in which were the following words—"I have read over Dr. Blair's first sermon with more than approbation; to say it is good is to say too little." The volume was then published, for which the author received L.50. Its sale was uncommonly rapid and extensive. His publishers generously presented him in a short time with fifty pounds more. These sermons were of essential advantage to him in another respect. The tragical riots in London in 1780 are well known, in consequence of a bill being introduced into Parliament for the relief of papists. At that hazardous period, it was thought proper, that Lord Chief Justice Mansfield should be at Windsor to advise His Majesty as the critical situation of public affairs might require. During that time he read to the Queen one of Dr. Blair's sermons, with which she was so much delighted, as to settle on the author an annual pension of two hundred pounds Sterling. He afterwards published a second volume, for which he received L.200, and again a third, when the booksellers at once offered L.600 for the copyright. Hardly any volumes of sermons have been so successful, not only in Great Britain, but throughout Europe and America.

Being now considerably advanced in years, he with the concurrence of the patrons, and at his own desire, was permitted to retire from the exercise of his duty as professor. He immediately set about revising and preparing for the press those lectures he had delivered in the College for the long period of twenty-eight years, with such unbounded applause. This he accomplished, and received for them L.1500 Sterling. These lectures have been long before the public, and

are universally admitted to contain the most judicious and best digested system respecting the different subjects connected with polite literature which have ever been given to the world.

Dr. Blair's health had been on the decline for a considerable time before his death. Though unable to appear in the pulpit, and confined for months to his bed-room, he retained his faculties to the last, and was preparing another volume of sermons when he died 27th December, 1800, in the eighty-third year of his age. This volume has been since published.

The Doctor's appearance was much in his favour, his features remarkably regular, and he was particularly attentive to dress. He had never cultivated oratory as a practical art, and never could be prevailed upon to be Moderator of the General Assembly, and took no share in the debates of that venerable court. Independently of a very strong provincial accent, his elocution was but indifferent from a defect in the organs of pronunciation. He was of the most amiable and friendly dispositions, and was ever ready to encourage men of genius. His literary friends always took the opportunity of submitting their works to him in order to have the benefit of his criticisms. They relied upon his candour, judgment and taste. In short, he held the very first rank among the literary characters of the present day.

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DR. JOHN HOPE.

An attempt has been made in the former part of this history to give an account of the gradual esta-

blishment of the Medical School in the University of Edinburgh. At first it existed indeed upon a very small scale, and seemed rather to be what might be called an experiment about whose ultimate success some doubt was entertained. Some of the Universities on the Continent of Europe had already risen into distinction, and very eminent professors of that science had from time to time appeared. Among these, that of Leyden took the lead. Its fame was extensively spread throughout the civilized world, as affording the best opportunities for being instructed in the knowledge of medicine. This celebrity was principally produced by the abilities of the illustrious Boerhaave and his successor in the same chair, Gaubius. Gottingen was also distinguished as a school of Medicine, particularly for Anatomy, in consequence of the indefatigable exertions of the celebrated Haller. Even in Sweden, medical science was at this time cultivated with ardour. Sir Charles Linnæus had commenced his splendid career, and had taught with reputation different branches of Medicine. But his success in forming a new classification both in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, beginning now to be more generally known, was received with unrivalled applause by the most distinguished naturalists in Europe, and speedily rendered the study of Botany one of the most inviting and popular of all the various departments of natural philosophy.

The person who did more to promote the cultivation of Botany in this country, whose ardour in the prosecution of the science itself, indefatigable industry in bringing the works of Linnæus into pub-

lic notice, as well as encouraging the students who attended his lectures, in the study of the Linnæan system, was the late excellent Dr. John Hope, who long held that professorship in Edinburgh with so much credit to himself, and benefit to his pupils.

He had early chosen Medicine as a profession, and every opportunity was afforded to him of cultivating his powers in the acquisition of medical knowledge. Besides attending the classes in his own country, he was for some time abroad diligently engaged in the prosecution of his favourite studies; and on his return home he took the degree of Doctor of Medicine at Glasgow on the 29th January 1750, and was admitted a licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians on the 6th November of the same year.

Upon the 13th April 1761 he was appointed King's Botanist for Scotland, and on the 25th of the same month he was elected by the Town Council Professor of Botany and Materia Medica in the University of Edinburgh. Having been only a licentiate before, he was on the 2d February 1762 admitted a fellow of the Royal College of Physicians, and receiving, on 8th May 1768, a commission from the King appointing him Regius Professor of Botany, he thought proper to resign the professorship of Materia Medica. This he did upon the subsequent 1st of June.

From the year 1761 to 1768 he delivered two courses of lectures. Those on the Materia Medica were very acceptable to the students, and in this respect he certainly materially contributed to extend the reputation of the Edinburgh Medical School.

But the bent of his genius seems to have been very early inclined to the cultivation of botany, and it is on his character as discharging the peculiar duties of Professor of Botany, that his fame chiefly depends. His ardour in cherishing in the minds of the students a decided partiality for this, certainly one of the most diversified and interesting of the sciences, was without example, at least in this part of the island, and his endeavours were not unaccompanied with success. He is justly entitled to the high honour of being the founder of a taste for Botanical studies in Scotland, not only by his example, but by the fascinating manner in which he pointed out and described the wonderful beauties with which nature has arrayed the inconceivable number of her productions. His benevolent mind, however, was not content with expatiating upon the beauty, order, and regularity, so universally to be observed in vegetable nature, but he also took peculiar delight in directing the attention of the youth to the manifold proofs which the kingdom of nature presents of the goodness and wisdom of that Almighty Being, who with a liberal hand has embellished all his works. The slow, but regular process of vegetation, and the wonders which it unfolds and displays, vibrated with singular emphasis to his mind, and upon which he always dwelt with peculiar delight.

When he was advanced to the botanical chair he directed the whole force of his attention to allure, by every means in his power, his pupils to prosecute a study from which he himself derived so much pleasure. For this purpose, towards the conclusion of each session, he annually gave a medal to the stu-

dent who had distinguished himself most remarkably by his diligence, and the progress he had made in the cultivation of the science. Upon it there was a suitable inscription. He justly thought, that the possession of this honourable testimony of approbation from him would stimulate the youth to exertion, and excite in them the ambition of excelling their comrades in the extent and variety of their botanical researches. The adjudging of this medal was left to the kind professor himself, but the determination of the point was referred to the production of the *Flora* by the student, and was ascertained by the extensiveness of the collection, and the taste and accuracy of the philosophical arrangement of the articles that it contained. This competition produced the desired effect. Every student was entitled to compete, and had an opportunity of examining the comparative progress of his associates.

Dr. Hope was indefatigable in his exertions. The botanic garden was originally on the low ground east of the North Bridge, and adjacent to Trinity Hospital. For many reasons besides its small extent, it was ill adapted to the purpose. He therefore used every endeavour to procure a more favourable situation, and in this he succeeded. The garden was occupied by a spot of ground between Leith and Edinburgh on the west of the walk, where it remained for many years, and was only removed lately in consequence of the encroaching of the buildings of the city of Edinburgh. It then possessed every requisite convenience. The ground was laid out under the immediate direction of the Doctor himself. The different plants were systematically arranged according to the

plan of Linnæus. Such situations were selected for them, as were most likely to make them thrive. Suitable hot-houses, &c. were erected, and there was also a pond for the nourishment of aquatic plants. In short, no labour nor expense was spared to accomplish the favourite object he had in view. It is likewise worthy of being remarked, that he was most particularly careful that the gardener employed should not only be eminent in his profession, but that both he and those under him should be persons of known fidelity and respectable character.

This celebrated professor and virtuous man died upon the 10th November 1786. His third son, Dr. Thomas Charles Hope, is the present Professor of Chemistry in the University.



## CHAPTER II.

*Principal Robertson—Birth—Education—At the University—Licensed to Preach—Ordained Minister of Gladsmuir—Translated to Edinburgh—Principal of the University—The acknowledged Leader of the Assembly—At an early period of life declined attending that venerable Court—Last illness—Death.*

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## PRINCIPAL WILLIAM ROBERTSON.

PRINCIPAL WILLIAM ROBERTSON, who long continued to be the chief ornament of the University of Edinburgh, was the eldest son of the Rev. William Robertson and of Eleanor Pitcairn, daughter of David Pitcairn, Esq. of Dreghorn.

His father was minister first at Borthwick, a parish in the county of Midlothian, about twelve miles south of Edinburgh. He was in the year 1733 translated to Edinburgh, and was successively minister of Lady Yester's and of the Old Greyfriar's Church. Very little is known of his history. He was descended from the Robertsons of Gladney in the county of Fife. Many of the members of that family have been distinguished for good sense, natural acuteness, and have risen to eminence in different lines of life. Where he received his education,

or of his early history in general, I have been able to learn nothing. Not only his son, but the late Dr. Erskine also have borne ample testimony to the amiableness of his dispositions, the liberality of his views, and the good sense which regulated his public and private behaviour. He was particularly attentive to the education of his family, and had the unspeakable pleasure of witnessing in his own lifetime the happy effects which had accompanied his parental care.

From a sermon preached by him before the synod of Lothian and Tweeddale in 1737, there can be little doubt that he was possessed of very considerable abilities. The style in which it is written is unaffected, and suitable to the subject, and it will bear to be compared with similar productions of a much later period. Its merit in this respect is great, and evidently shows that he had paid more attention to the rules and to the art of composition than most of his contemporaries.

It is entitled "Ministers ought to please God rather than Men." The general plan of the discourse is judicious, and the illustrations are exceedingly appropriate. From the allusions which are made to Horace, Sallust, and Quintilian, I entertain little doubt of his having been a good classical scholar, because the general tone of the sermon is such as to show in the clearest manner, that he was far superior to the silly vanity of making a parade of his learning.

That he was a Calvinist cannot admit of a question.\* It appears also that Mr. Robertson was a

\* Vid. the Sermon throughout, but especially p. 23.

popular preacher, and much esteemed by his congregation, not only as being a judicious and worthy minister, but for talents likewise which attract a numerous audience.\*

The Principal was born upon the 8th of September, O. S. 1721 at Borthwick. He received the rudiments of his education at the parish school, and at a proper age was placed under the care of Mr. Leslie, who taught the grammar school at Dalkeith with great reputation, being esteemed one of the most able and successful teachers of the Latin and Greek languages then to be found in Scotland. At this seminary young Robertson was thoroughly grounded in the principles of the Latin language, and formed a taste for classical learning, which never forsook him. Of the early appearance which he made at school, nothing is known for certain. Mr. Leslie did not live long enough to witness the future fame of his pupil, nor to enjoy the honour which was reflected upon himself by having conducted the education of so celebrated an historian. His son, however, the late Professor of Greek in King's College, Aberdeen, beheld with great satisfaction Dr. Robertson's well-merited success, and the applause with which his works were received by the public, and seemed to consider it as a just cause for honourable pride, that so eminent a literary character was educated at his father's seminary.

In what year he left the school at Dalkeith and repaired to Edinburgh cannot be ascertained with

\* Erskine's Sermon, p. 115; also Memorial concerning the call of Ministers, &c. addressed to the Lord Provost, &c. p. 23. Edin. 1736, 12mo.

precision. The album of the University was not then kept with that accuracy by which it is distinguished since the period of Dr. Robertson's preferment to the principality. The precise year in which he was admitted a member of the University is not of itself a matter of great consequence, yet every minute circumstance connected with the history of so great a man cannot fail of being interesting to the public. That there is some mistake in regard to dates by his biographer, Professor Stewart, and those who have chiefly followed him, is certain. In the first place, we have the authority of Dr. Erskine, that his acquaintance with his revered colleague first "commenced in 1737, at the humanity class, then taught by Mr. John Ker." It has been already mentioned, that Mr. Ker was admitted a professor on the 2d of October 1734,\* so that if Mr. Stewart be correct, that he entered college in 1733, he must have studied for a year under Mr. Watt. Again, the date of his licence to preach the Gospel by the presbytery of Dalkeith is specified to be in 1741. Now, an extract from the records of that presbytery inserted afterwards, show that he was licensed in the year 1743, when he was in his twenty-second year, a period of life much more probable than that he was admitted to his probationary trials before he had completed his twentieth year.

One of the most remarkable features of Dr. Robertson's character was the early passion he discovered for literature, and the undiminished ardour which he manifested during the course of a long

\* Vid. vol. ii. p. 299.

life in the prosecution of his studies. He had, at a very tender age, imbibed a strong taste for the pursuits of polite literature. Some of his common-place books are still preserved, and afford the most satisfactory evidence of his early habits of application to study, and of the strong bent of his genius to the cultivation of elegant learning. They are as early as the years 1735, 1736, 1737, and are invariably marked with the motto "*Vita sine literis mors est.*" He appears even then, though perhaps unconscious to himself, to have felt the presentiment of the future eminence at which he should arrive, and to have laid down such plans for the improvement of his faculties, which he strenuously carried into execution, as could not fail ultimately to be crowned with the most certain success.

Under the tuition of Mr. Leslie, his taste for classical literature was formed, and during the first years of his attendance at college, his attention appears to have been exclusively directed to the acquisition of Greek and Roman learning. The fortunate direction which his studies had taken was zealously seconded by Professors Drummond and Ker, an account of whom has been given in the former part of this history.\* Both chairs had been ably filled for a long series of years, and the good effects which were thereby produced, were generally felt throughout the University, and were of great service to the cause of literature in this part of the island.

But the person to whom Principal Robertson considered himself as under the greatest obligations, and

\* Vid. vol. ii. p. 269 and 296.

of whose labours he took every opportunity of expressing himself in terms of the highest commendation, was Dr. John Stevenson, Professor of Logic.\* The variety of information which was introduced in the course of his lectures, the indefatigable pains which he bestowed in forming the minds of the young students to a taste for elegant letters, have seldom been equalled, and never surpassed. The immense field of literary discussion which was presented to Dr. Robertson's view, roused his youthful but ardent imagination, and kindled in him an eager desire to gratify his juvenile curiosity, and to exert those energies which are only possessed by men of true genius.

Under Sir John Pringle† he studied moral philosophy, and was first introduced to an acquaintance with the writings of many ancient and modern moralists, of which, from the limited range of his studies, he had as yet only an imperfect knowledge. His genius seems at no time to have led him to cultivate to any great extent mathematical or physical science, though the celebrated M'Laurin‡ was then in the zenith of his reputation, and was distinguished for qualifications which are not often united in the same person—the most accurate acquaintance with the whole of the mathematics, together with the talent of conveying to the minds of his hearers the clearest conceptions of the most abstract truths, accompanied with a very fascinating manner of delivery. The truth appears to be, that his predilection for polite literature had been formed before, in the ordinary

\* Vid. vol. ii. p. 269, &c.

† Ibid. p. 286.

‡ Ibid. p. 221.

course of academical instruction, his attention was required to mathematical learning.

At the period when he was going through his literary and philosophical courses, the University of Edinburgh contained a numerous band of youths who had devoted themselves to the study of general literature. The example of industry and application which they mutually exhibited, stimulated them to exertion, and produced a laudable rivalry accompanied with the most beneficial effects. Literary societies were formed, in which the opinions of the professors, and the doctrines inculcated by them, were freely canvassed; essays composed by the members on subjects connected with the Belles Lettres, or on philosophical subjects which were sometimes prescribed by the general voice of the society, and at other times left to the taste and inclination of the authors, were delivered. The merits and demerits of these compositions were publicly discussed, and the business of the society was concluded by a debate upon a question of which public intimation had been made at the meeting immediately preceding. These associations were generously patronized by the professors, who rendered every assistance to their pupils in the way of advice, whether it regarded the literary business of the society, or the laws by which it was governed.

Dr. Robertson took an early and an active part in the discussions which were introduced on these occasions, and distinguished himself among his comrades by the superiority of his powers, the readiness of his elocution, and the taste he showed in the Essays he delivered. He retained through life a con-

viction of the utility of such societies, during his principality constantly encouraged their institution, and in the most condescending manner, when applied to, kindly entered into the views of the members, and communicated such advice as was admirably calculated to promote their prosperity.

The precise year in which he was enrolled a student of divinity cannot be ascertained. The truth is, that very great latitude was then granted to students. Neither was the time necessary to be spent at the philosophy classes previous to the admission of a student to the Hall, nor was even the term of his attendance there accurately settled by law. The Professor of Theology appears to have possessed, and in many instances to have exercised, a discretionary power recognised by the different presbyteries of the church, because his certificate of the proficiency of the candidate for licence, and of his having delivered all his exercises with approbation, was deemed to be perfectly sufficient for being admitted upon trials. Regulations respecting these points were not enacted by the church till the year 1782, when it was determined, "that before being admitted to the Hall, every student must have gone through a full course of philosophy at the College, or produce to the Professor of Divinity a diploma of Master of Arts—and that previous to licence he must have given a close attendance on the Divinity Hall for the space of four years from the time of his enrollment, if his circumstances did not allow him to give close attendance on the Hall, have continued to prosecute the study of divinity for six years, and have delivered the usual number of discourses ; pro-



vided that at the time of his being admitted to trials he is twenty-one years of age complete.”\*

The professor under whom Dr. Robertson studied was Dr. John Goldie.† He afterwards succeeded, as has been mentioned, his old preceptor as principal. All that is known of his plan of study whilst at the Hall is, that his father, whose anxiety for the improvement of his son in Theological learning was very great, and whose library contained copies of the writings of the most celebrated Arminian divines, pointed out to him what might be learned from them. From this, in the opinion of a very candid judge, and than whom no one had a better opportunity of being informed, he probably contracted his early and high esteem for the works of Le Blanc, Limborch, and others, whose writings contain the best defence of those peculiar doctrines which were condemned by the Synod of Dort. Independently of the authority of Dr. Erskine just quoted, the exercise prescribed to him at the Hall respecting the history of Arminians would naturally lead his attention very particularly to the investigation of those points which their controversy with the Calvinists involves. I say “the exercises prescribed to him at the Hall,” because it is well known that the Latin discourse delivered there is, if the candidate for licence choose, always received as one of the exercises delivered before the Presbytery. Now this, as we shall immediately see, was prescribed to him by the Presbytery of Dalkeith. Dr. Erskine’s remark, therefore, that

\* Abridgement of Acts of Assembly under Article Probationers. The Act of Assembly 1803 is little more than an echo of that of 1782.

† Vid. vol. ii. p. 283.

his father candidly pointed out what might be learned from the works of the Arminian divines, though their scheme of theology was different from his own, may very naturally be supposed to have proceeded from his desire to assist his son to form accurate notions respecting the real state of that celebrated controversy which occasioned the convocation of a synod of perhaps more learned and able protestant divines than the history of the reformed churches has yet exhibited. It would be presumptuous in the extreme to affirm that Dr. Robertson leaned to the Arminian side of the question, because neither his writings, his public ministrations, the declarations of his sentiments in church courts, nor the testimony of his most intimate and most valued friends lead to any such conclusion. He was too wise a man to commit himself upon a subject which has exercised the learning, the critical skill, and metaphysical acuteness of the most illustrious theologians, or to determine upon points which very candid and competent judges have not scrupled to declare as their opinion, will be received in different aspects by different individuals as long as men exercise the right of private judgment, and reason upon subjects far above the limited faculties of man to comprehend.

The discourse itself, however, if in existence, would certainly be a great curiosity, not because it might be expected to develope the peculiar sentiments of the writer, but because there is every probability that it would throw light upon the degree of cultivation which his talents had already attained, and might afford a high gratification to those who are fond of literary history, and delight to trace the

progress of distinguished genius. His numerous admirers also cannot fail to be solicitous of knowing whether "The history of the Arminians afforded any indications of that soundness of judgment, fertility of invention, copiousness of illustration, and luminous arrangement, for which those works are so distinguished, that he gave to the world in the maturity of his powers."

The following extract is curious in many points of view, as it contains a most distinct account of the ordinary mode of licensing probationers in the Church of Scotland, and will of course convey to those who are unacquainted with the mode of procedure in that affair, an idea of the preparatory trials to which every candidate must submit :—

"Edinburgh Laigh Coffee-House, 4th May, 1743.\*  
—This day was given in to this Presbytery (*of Dalkeith*) a recommendation from the Presbytery of Edinburgh, and subscribed by Mr. William Aitken, moderator, in favour of Mr. William Robertson, student of divinity, son to the Rev. Mr. William Robertson, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, to pass his trials before this presbytery, a committee of the Presbytery of Edinburgh, having examined the said Mr. Robertson as to his fitness to be entered upon trials—and neighbouring presbyteries being acquainted therewith. The presbytery having considered the same, appoint Mr. Thomas Turnbull, Borthwick, this forenoon to propose the said Mr. Robertson to the synod, for his being entered upon trials. The

\* During the sitting of the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale in Edinburgh, the seven Presbyteries composing it may meet separately on their own affairs.

presbytery adjourned their meeting till afternoon in the same place,—Eodem die post meridiem—after prayer, sederunt qui supra, Mr. Turnbull reported, that according to appointment he had acquainted the synod of the resolution of this presbytery to take Mr. William Robertson upon trials, and moved that the presbytery would just now call upon him and examine him—To which the presbytery agreed, and the said Mr. Robertson being called in, each of the brethren present having examined him upon different heads of divinity, he was unanimously approved in this part of his trials, and the presbytery appointed him an homily upon Galatians, 3d chap. 26th verse—and an *Exegesis De Necessitate Revelationis supernaturalis*, in both which he was approved as parts of his trials—and the presbytery appoint him an *exercise and addition* from Hebrews, 8th chap. 2d verse, “A minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man,” as also a lecture on the seventh chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

“Dalkeith, 21st June, 1743—Mr. William Robertson according to appointment, delivered his *lecture* upon the 7th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, as also his *exercise and addition*, from Hebrews, 8th chap. 2d verse, “A minister of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man,” in both which discourses he was approved, and the presbytery appoint him a *popular sermon* from the 8th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, verse 28th, as also a chronological discourse, *De historia Arminianorum usque ad finem Synodi Dodracenæ*, and likewise a section in Hebrew, of the 119th Psalm, from the

letter *Ain*, to be interpreted, and appoint him to give in his thesis to be impugned, and also to explain a portion of the Greek New Testament, *ad aperturam libri*—all which he is to deliver Tuesday come seven night the 28th of this instant.

“Dalkeith, 28th June, 1743.—Mr. William Robertson, according to appointment, delivered his *popular sermon* from the 8th chapter of Romans and 28th verse, “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose,” and was approved. Eod. die P.M. after prayer sederunt, qui supra. Mr. William Robertson, according to appointment, delivered his chronological discourse, *De historia Arminianorum usque ad finem Synodi Dodracenæ*, sustained disputes on his *Thesis*, interpreted a section in Hebrew, of the 119th Psalm from the letter *Ain*, and a portion of the Greek New Testament, *ad aperturam libri*—answered the catechetical questions, in all which he was approved. The presbytery taking a joint view of all his trials did (after his giving satisfying answers to the questions usually proposed to the candidates before they be licensed, and his subscribing the formula prescribed by the Assembly, 1711,) license him to preach the Gospel as a probationer within their bounds, and appointed him to preach at Borthwick, Sabbath first, the 3d July next.

“Newton Kirk, July 19, 1743.—The presbytery being convened after the ordination of Mr. Gilchrist, Mr. Turnbull moved that as Mr. William Robertson would probably be called to the bounds of another presbytery soon, the presbytery would appoint him an extract of his licence, which was unanimously

agreed to, and the clerk hereby appointed accordingly.”\*

The subjects prescribed to him by the presbytery, as must have been perceived, involve some of the leading peculiarities of the Christian Revelation, in the discussion of which it was impossible for him (especially at that period) not to declare his sentiments. The presbytery sustained both his private and public trials, licensed him to preach upon the 28th June 1743, and what appears to be singular, the first appointment which he received from them was to preach at Borthwick, the place of his birth.

Thus, in little more than three weeks from the commencement of his public trials, he became what is technically called a *Probationer*. The cause of this expedition, which is far from being a common practice, and perhaps also of his being transferred from the presbytery of Edinburgh to that of Dalkeith, was probably the prospect which he and his friends had of his being speedily presented to a church. A much longer time would have been required to have accomplished his obtaining a licence from the presbytery of Edinburgh, in consequence of the multifarious business which necessarily engages the time of the presbytery of the capital above that of a country presbytery. He was not long disappointed in his expectations, for in the course of a few months he received a presentation from the Earl of Hopetoun to the living of Gladsmuir, which is about twelve miles distant from Edinburgh, and was ordained minister of that parish in May 1744. Dr. Robertson's abilities as a preacher had attracted the

\* Records of the Presbytery of Dalkeith.

notice of this very intelligent and public-spirited nobleman, and he received powerful recommendations to his lordship from his uncle-in-law William Adam, Esq. at that time the most eminent architect in Scotland, and who then engrossed almost all the business of the nobility and gentry of Scotland in the line of his profession.

Upon repairing to Gladsmuir he entered upon the discharge of his clerical functions with his characteristic sense of propriety and a conviction of the importance of the station he was now called to fill. Though instruction from the pulpit constitutes one chief part of the duty of a parish minister, it does not comprehend the whole, and indeed, when viewed in a certain light, is far from being the most practically useful, or perhaps I ought rather to have said, that in order to produce the desired effect it must be accompanied with the faithful discharge of other duties which in all protestant countries, particularly in Scotland, have been considered as forming a part of the pastoral office.

Dr. Robertson was careful to be well prepared when he appeared in the pulpit, and I have been assured by one who was his parishioner about that time, that from the very first he was an exceedingly popular preacher, and that during the fourteen years of his residence at Gladsmuir his popularity was daily increasing. His attention to his parochial duty was laborious and exemplary—he punctually attended to what, in the language of the Church, is called, “The ministerial visitation of families,” that is, he regularly visited the inhabitants of his parish at their own houses in the capacity of their minister. During the summer

months he catechized the youth for some time previous to the ordinary hour of the commencement of the morning service. He visited the sick, administered comfort to the afflicted, and such was the respect and reverence in which he was held by his flock, and the confidence they reposed in the superiority of his judgment and readiness to serve them, that in every emergency they applied to him for advice.

But his fame as a preacher was not confined within the bounds of his own parish. The occasional public appearances which he made before his brethren of the presbytery impressed them with a high idea of his talents, and thus his reputation rapidly spread. We are informed that a volume of sermons which he had prepared with great care was lost at Gladsmuir previous to his removal to Edinburgh. But whether they were intended for publication or not seems to be uncertain. During the whole term of his academical course, as well as his residence at Gladsmuir, he never relaxed his literary pursuits, and like many other eminent characters, seems to have been strongly persuaded that there was no better mean by which he could improve himself in the art of composition than by translating striking passages from the classics. He had begun, with a view to publication, to translate the Meditations of Marcus Antoninus, and was prevented from executing the task in consequence of a translation of that author making its appearance at Glasgow.

He had been only a short time at Gladsmuir when he met with one of the most afflicting dispensations of providence that can well be conceived. His fa-



ther and mother were cut off by death within a few hours of each other, and what added greatly to so heavy a calamity, they left six daughters and a son beside the doctor to lament their loss. Scanty as the revenue of a clergyman in the church of Scotland is known then to have been, their affectionate and generous brother instantly formed the resolution of taking them home to his own house at Gladsmuir. His six sisters remained under his hospitable roof until they were all honourably settled in life except one, who died unmarried. His brother Patrick was at this time otherwise provided for, he afterwards became a very eminent goldsmith in Edinburgh, and died at Harrowgate a good many years ago, whither he had gone for the sake of his health. He is represented as having been a man of address, and to have materially assisted the Doctor in accomplishing some of his measures during the sitting of the General Assembly, when ecclesiastical politics ran high; and the votes nearly equal.

Meanwhile the rebellion of 1745 broke out, which excited an uncommon degree of anxiety in the minds of the protestants of Scotland, and of all who favoured the succession in the house of Hanover. The recollection of the fatal effects which had ensued, in consequence of what had taken place in that of 1715, was still lively, and when accompanied with the knowledge of what has universally happened in all civil wars, the most uneasy sensations were produced. The interest which the clergy of the church of Scotland took, in protecting both the civil and religious privileges of the state upon this critical emergency, was conspicuous. They exerted all their

influence against the Pretender. Dr. Robertson was zealously attached to the present royal family. When information was received, that an invasion was intended to be made by the eldest son of the Pretender, he considered it to be his duty, and by no means inconsistent with his profession as a clergyman, to join the royal standard. He accordingly repaired to Edinburgh, and entered himself as a volunteer. This body, which consisted of nine companies, assembled in the college yard, when it was for certainty known that the rebel army was in the vicinity of the city, and directing their march towards it. They resolved to co-operate with the king's forces, but either through intrigue, or the disaffection of some of the members, they marched no farther than the Grassmarket, and then dispersed. The true causes of this mode of behaviour have never been fully explained. Among those who disapproved of this measure, was Dr. Robertson. He and a few others repaired to Had-dington, and offered their services to the commander of his Majesty's forces.

After the suppression of the rebellion, and when tranquillity was restored to the country, he was permitted to resume his accustomed labours; and nothing particular occurs in his history, till the year 1751, when he made his first appearance in the General Assembly.

As this constitutes a new era, not in Dr. Robertson's life only, but in that of the history of the church of Scotland, it will be necessary to explain the circumstances of the case. The question under the discussion of the Assembly, when he first addressed them, was that of patronage.

To attempt to give a full account of the origin and history of patronage, would lead to a disquisition which, how curious and interesting soever it might be esteemed, would necessarily introduce a discussion very disproportionate to the object which we have in view. It is the province of the antiquary or of the lawyer, to discuss such subjects. And after all the inquiries which have been instituted respecting it, the conclusions which have been drawn, as is generally the case on all difficult questions, are various and inconsistent with each other. The Independent, the Presbyterian, and the Episcopalian, have each espoused a different theory.

Whatever view we take of the state of the case, as it was in the earliest ages of the church, little doubt can be entertained, that when it came to be considered in the light of a privilege or a right, that it was in the hands of ecclesiastics. That class who originally derived their influence and power, from their claiming the right of jurisdiction in spiritual matters alone, were not tardy in extending the sphere in which they considered themselves as entitled to act. In process of time, they acquired the possession of large tracts of country; and such churches or religious houses as were within the district, were declared to be dependent upon him who assumed the double character of being both a spiritual and civil superior. When these lands were alienated, as was frequently the case, and disposed of to laymen, as an inducement, or in order to render the purchase more valuable, the patronage of the benefices which were upon the property, was also annexed. This annexation will appear to have been the more natural, when we take

into the account, that the funds from which the subsistence of the incumbent was derived, proceeded from the property which had been sold.

Sometimes, however, *impropriations*, or ecclesiastical livings, in the hands of a layman, derived their origin from a different source. Power is exceedingly agreeable to the mind. Many persons who were zealous for the prosperity of the church and of churchmen, appropriated portions of their property, and devoted it for the express purpose of supporting the incumbent of a certain church or chapel, which in most instances was erected by themselves. But they reserved the right of presentation to the benefice. In short, what has now been briefly stated, seems to include all the cases which have occurred in the history of the church, respecting the origin of patronage, whether clerical or laical. It formed originally a part of that complex, but singular fabric, the church of Rome, and is now so incorporated with the statute and ecclesiastical law of all modern protestant states, as to be esteemed a necessary appendage to the very existence of a national church.

The singular circumstances which attended the accomplishment of the Reformation in Scotland, have necessarily hindered its ecclesiastical history from assuming that regular aspect which the detail above given seems to require. Nevertheless, zealous as the reformers were, in asserting the rights of the people, they either had not the inclination, or were afraid to exercise the power of depriving such laymen of the privilege of *presenting* to those benefices which became vacant from time to time, and which, by immemorial usage, had been in the gift of their families.

Indeed, such was the scarcity, and so great the demand for protestant ministers, that neither the patrons nor the people were disposed to be difficult to please, far less to be captious in the election of a pastor. The chief circumstance upon which stress was laid, consisted in ascertaining, that he who was presented, was a qualified person, by which was understood, that he was a protestant, and had received the sanction of the ecclesiastical authorities.

The first attempt, as far as I have been able to discover, which was made to deprive patrons of the right of presentation, was in 1649. And in place of it, "the free teinds within every parish, were settled upon them, under the condition of selling the same to the heritors at six years' purchase." This plan, however, was soon found to be very inefficient. The heritors, in general, did not come forward, had not zeal sufficient, and were unwilling to incur the expense of the purchase. And besides, such was the fervour that pervaded the nation, that all ranks concurred in waving their peculiar privileges, and contributed to the promotion of what was esteemed to be the common cause.

Upon the restoration of the exiled family in 1660, great revolutions were effected both in church and state, and among others, patrons were restored to the possession of their *advocations*, *donations*, and *patronages*. This continued to be the law during the whole of that melancholy and disastrous period, which intervened between the restoration and the revolution. It was William's policy to conciliate the nation; and among the first acts of his reign, the Presbyterian form of church government was restor-

ed, than which no measure could have been more agreeable to the feelings of the country at large ; and the right of presentation was taken from patrons. It was ordained, “ That in case of the vacancy of any particular church, the heritors of the said parish being protestants, and the elders, are to name and propose the person to the whole congregation, to be either approved or disapproved by them ; and if they disapprove, that the disapprovers give in their reasons, to the effect the affair may be cognised upon by the presbytery of the bounds, at whose judgment the calling and entry of a particular minister is to be concluded. And if application be not made by the eldership and heritors of the parish, for the call and choice of a minister, within six months after the vacancy, then the presbytery may proceed to provide the said parish, *tanquam jure devoluto*. The calling of ministers to royal burghs, where there is no *landward* (country) parish, to be by the magistrates, town-council, and kirk-session of the burgh, as was the case before 1660. But where a considerable part of the parish is in *landward*, the call shall be by the magistrates, town-council, kirk-session, and heritors of the landward parish. In recompence of the said right of presentation, it is ordained, That the heritors and life-renters of each parish, and the town-council for the burgh, pay to the said patrons, the sum of 600 merks, (L.33, 6s. 8d.) proportioned according to the valued rent ; two-thirds by the heritors, and a third by the life-renters, reducing the patron’s proportion as an heritor ; and that, upon the patron’s granting a renunciation of the said right of presentation, in favour of the heritors, town-council

for the burgh, and kirk-session. And with respect to parishes where the king is patron, he shall be fully denuded of his right of presentation, upon payment of the said 600 merks to the clerk of treasury."

Even this indulgence on the part of government was disregarded, if not despised, and hardly any advantage was taken of it; and consequently, things were allowed to proceed in their accustomed channel. Dissensions, however, between the patrons, the heritors, and the body of the people, occasionally occurred; and at last, in the year 1711, the act of 1690 was repealed, and "it was declared lawful for patrons who have not subscribed a formal renunciation of their right, to present a qualified minister, whom the presbytery is obliged to receive and admit, in the same manner as those presented before the making of this act, ought to have been admitted."

This act was passed by Queen Anne's Tory ministry, and produced an extraordinary sensation throughout the country. What the ultimate designs of that administration were, is still a problem in British history, and most probably will ever remain so. The obvious intention of this statute, however, was to gain over the great landed proprietors to support the measures of government, and to extend the influence of the crown. The mass of the people not only resisted the execution of this law, but representations were made against it by the General Assembly; from which it cannot be doubted, that it had passed through parliament, without the concurrence or even the knowledge of the church. The Commission (or standing committee) of Assembly in 1711, remonstrated against it, and the Assembly approved of their conduct as

*most faithful and seasonable.* And again, the Assembly of 1715 approved of "a memorial, setting forth fully the Church's grievances, from patronages, &c., and enjoined the Commission to use all due means to obtain redress, and to send the same to the secretary of state, to be laid before his Majesty."

No redress, however, was obtained, partly in consequence of the then disturbed state of the country, but principally from few patrons choosing fully to exercise their rights, in consequence of the opposition they had to encounter from the ecclesiastical courts, and the commotion which what was termed a violent settlement produced in the country. It is cause of wonder, that it did not produce greater disturbances than actually took place. Both the clergy and laity were hostile to patronage, as confirmed by the statute. The prepossessions of the populace were altogether in favour of the opinion, that they had an undisputed negative upon the patron's nomination; and had either the church judicatories or the patrons vigorously acted, as they were authorised to do by law, they would have created a much more formidable rebellion than that which was made in favour of the house of Stuart.

Those who are acquainted with the History of the Church of Scotland need not be informed that the causes which chiefly occupied the attention of the Assembly previous to 1751, respected orthodoxy of doctrine. This was the case in regard to what was called "*The Marrow*" controversy—the various processes carried on against Professor Simson—those against Mr. John Glas—and even those which finally issued in the foundation of a body of Seceders from



the Established Church. Orthodoxy of opinion was then much more regarded than it has been of late years, and such was the state of public opinion, that the most rigid adherence to certain modes of phraseology was required. The introduction of any forms of phraseology which were different from what was in general use or had received the sanction of the standards of the Church, was reckoned a capital offence, as was shown in the prosecutions of Campbell, Wishart, and Leechman.

The case, however, which first called forth Dr. Robertson's powers as an orator in the General Assembly had no reference whatever to orthodoxy of sentiment. It regarded discipline alone, and those who were the sufferers, were men of the most unblemished characters, most exemplary behaviour, and much beloved by their parishioners. They could not reconcile themselves to the law of patronage, considering it as inconsistent with that Christian liberty which they believed to be the unalienable inheritance of every disciple of the Lord Jesus.

The Erskines and their followers were equally hostile to the forcing of a minister upon a parish contrary to the will of the people, and this was one ground of their dissent, but the sole cause of the deposition of the Rev. Thomas Gillespie was his refusing to obey the commands of the Assembly to ordain Mr. Andrew Richardson, minister of Inverkeithing.

It must not be for a moment supposed that the question of patronage had never been discussed, nor had ever been brought under the review of the church courts. There had existed for a very considerable time

a party in the church who perfectly approved both of the spirit and the letter of the law, but from unfavourable circumstances, and want of confidence, they never durst come boldly forward in its defence. Like all popular assemblies, the supreme ecclesiastical court consisted of two parties, the one disposed to approve of the measures of government, and the other who avowed themselves to be the defenders of the rights of the people. At this time they appear to have been nearly equal in regard to numbers, and the case of Mr. Richardson afforded a favourable opportunity for a trial of strength.

This gentleman had received a presentation to the living of Inverkeithing in due form from the patron. He was regularly qualified to accept of it, and did so. His moral character was good, no objections were lodged against his doctrine, but the parish disliked him as a preacher. The cause had been keenly agitated in the inferior courts and came before the assembly in the form of appeal. It was on this occasion that Dr. Robertson first offered himself to the notice of that venerable house, and boldly avowed opinions which, though secretly cherished by some of his brethren, they felt considerable hesitation in publicly defending. The case, to all appearance, was as desperate a one as ever came before a General Assembly. The people of Inverkeithing had fixed their affections upon another gentleman, and had petitioned the patron to indulge them in their wishes, but he refused to gratify them, and persisted in asserting his right.

It may be necessary for the information of some to mention, that before any one can be inducted to

a parish in the Church of Scotland, besides the presentation from the patron, he must also receive *a call*, if not from a majority, at least from some members of the congregation. Therefore, what is technically termed the *moderation of a call*, in all cases precedes ordination. This consists of the heritors subscribing a paper containing their acquiescence and approbation of the person *called* to be their minister. Few or none had come forward and given their sanction to Mr. Richardson, the opposition to his settlement being almost universal. It was upon this ground that Mr. Gillespie and his adherents stated their objections to his admission, and it is but candid to allow, that it carries the air of plausibility along with it. Why ask the concurrence of a parish to a presentee, when, by the law of the land, he can be forced upon them? So strongly did this strike some members of Assembly, that so late as the year 1782, it was moved (if I mistake not) that the ceremony of the *moderation of a call* should be dispensed with, but it was declared "that the moderation of a call in the settlement of ministers, is agreeable to the immemorial and constitutional practice of the church, and ought to be continued." The terms of this decision evidently show that the question of the consistency of moderating a call with the law of patronage was studiously avoided.

The view which Dr. Robertson took of patronage was clearly sanctioned by the statute, and founding his reasoning upon the acknowledged principle of the necessity of obedience to the law, it was impossible to set aside his arguments upon the general question. In the course of his speech he is also re-

presented as having commented with singular clearness and force upon the danger of permitting popular elections, or of granting that the voice of the people in the election of a minister should be regarded. This certainly was a very powerful auxiliary illustration, which in his hands would lose nothing. The one half of the members of the Presbytery of Dunfermline had refused to be present, or to assist at Mr. Richardson's ordination. And this they had done in direct violation of the injunctions of the Assembly. When this came in course before the *Commission*, the state of church politics was such, and the opinions of the members respecting the most proper mode of procedure, that no censure was passed upon the refractory ministers. Dr. Robertson considered this as preposterous lenity, and accordingly entered his protest to the General Assembly, in which he was joined by a few of his friends.\* The paper is to be found at full length in the Scots Magazine for that year. It was chiefly drawn up by Dr. Robertson, and contains a most distinct account of the principles upon which he himself acted at the time, and exhibits an outline of that system of ecclesiastical politics which has been successfully followed by the majority in the General Assembly.

In estimating Dr. Robertson's ecclesiastical politics, I am not conscious to myself of any undue pre-

\* These were Mr. John Home, author of Douglas, Dr. John Jardine, minister of the Tron Church, and son-in-law to Provost Drummond, Dr. Hugh Blair, Mr. Matthew Reid, Mr. Peter Simson, Mr. Abraham Hume, ministers. The Master of Ross, George Drummond, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, Messrs. Alexander M'Millan, Andrew Pringle, (Lord Alemoor,) Joseph Williamson, Robert Pringle, William Hallowell, and Dr. Whytt, ruling elders.

possession either upon one side or the other. But to a considerate inquirer into the history of the Church of Scotland during the course of the last century, it cannot fail to have occurred that the difficulties, in regard to patronage, were, upon which side soever you beheld it, of a very equivocal nature. The law of the land, good subjects will readily acknowledge, must be regarded and ought to be respected. Yet the case which came before the Assembly, required all the address and eloquence of which Dr. Robertson was so great a master, to make his statement palatable to the audience to which he appealed.

Miracles are not now to be expected, seeing that the evidence in confirmation of the Christian scriptures are finally closed. We are too apt to wonder at the extraordinary success which some few eminent individuals may have obtained, but it may be regarded as what has always corresponded with the common course of human affairs, that no individual, by his own unassisted powers, ever accomplished any great revolution. The active co-operation of others is also requisite, if success is to be insured. In the present instance of that of patronage in the Church of Scotland, it cannot be denied, that the imperceptible but continued progress of the sentiments upon which all administrations acted from 1711 till his appearance in the Assembly, tended to the crisis in which he made so conspicuous a figure.

Though the inclinations of the people of Scotland were hostile to the law of patronage, and employed every mean in their power to resist it, yet the practical meaning of the statute had been gaining ground, and, with a few exceptions, the wishes of

the landed gentry the patrons of the different parishes, and the influence of the Crown, ran in that channel. Dr. Robertson felt great encouragement in consequence of being assured of the assistance of his early friends, who had both the inclination and the talents to second his efforts. His early friends were no inconsiderable men. Their union with him had been cemented by intimacy, and a great knowledge of the sentiments of each other prevailed.—Those of the clergy who declared themselves in favour of his view of the subject in dispute, were of his own standing, and, as far as I have been able to trace their history, personally attached to him, perfectly aware, from his talents as a man of business and as a public speaker, that when he once committed himself before the General Assembly, he would both acquit himself with credit, not injure their character as clergymen, and promote the general object which they all wished to establish as the law of the church.

One cannot help expressing some degree of wonder that he, who had not completed his thirtieth year, should have thus boldly adventured to stem the general current, and to become the founder of a new dynasty. His success afterwards, though it certainly illustrates the skill with which his plans were formed, and the ability he discovered in their execution, only affords an imperfect idea of the superiority of the powers of that man who, starting as it were, from obscurity, made an indelible impression upon the most liberal, the most learned, the most respectable, and the most numerous Assembly which is to be found in the Scottish nation. The principle that guided him through life was pru-

dence. In this instance he did not calculate without his host, and coming prepared as he was, it was almost impossible not to insure success.

I have no reason to presume that, at the early stage of the process respecting the settlement of Inverkeithing, the *ministry* were informed or consulted, but correct information was in those days always transmitted to the seat of government of whatever was transacted in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.—His private admirers were numerous, and they no doubt had spread his fame, but from the very first appearance which he made, some of the best judges, who were his hearers, marked him out as the person who was most likely to become the leader of that party in the church, whose cause he espoused.

When it had been determined by the Assembly that one of the six ministers who were disobedient should be deposed, it carried by a great majority, that this censure should be inflicted upon Mr. Thomas Gillespie.\* This gentleman appears to have

\* These six ministers were Messrs. Thomas Gillespie at Carnock, Robert Stark at Torryburn, David Hunter at Saline, Alexander Daling at Cleish, Thomas Fernie at Dunfermline, and John Spence at Orwell.

The history of Mr. Gillespie is rather singular. He was born in the vicinity of Edinburgh. His parents were strict presbyterians, and it is probable were attached to the principles of the Secession Church, because Mr. G. after having studied the regular time at the University of Edinburgh, instead of entering the Divinity Hall there, repaired to Perth and studied under Mr. Wilson, who, by the authority of the Associate Presbytery, held that chair. How long he continued with the Secession is not known. It is certain that for some time he prosecuted his studies with a view to become a minister in that connection. By the advice of his friends, as is said, he resolved to go to England, and accordingly set out for Northampton, where the celebrated Dr. Doddridge kept an

been much more zealous than any of his brethren, but even those who were most violent in their opposition to him, declared their conviction of Mr. Gillespie's integrity, and their belief that in his conduct he was actuated by the purest motives. His behaviour during the course of the process was becoming and most respectful to the Assembly, and excited very general sympathy. He was at this time one of the most popular preachers in the church, and was almost adored by his parish. They, therefore, unanimously subscribed a petition to the Assembly, begging that they would *repose* Mr. Gillespie. So popular was his character that the patron, with the concurrence of the presbytery, did not *present* a successor, being persuaded that the prayer of the petition would be granted. It was laid before the Assembly in May 1753. The following very curious document contains a more distinct account of that transaction than as yet has been given to the public. It is a letter from the late Dr. John Erskine, to his valued friend the late William Hogg, Esq.\* then out of town.

academy for the education of students who had devoted themselves to the ministry. He became one of the Doctor's pupils. Having gone through the regular course of instruction, he received a certificate of his qualifications, and speedily got a call to a church. He did not remain long in England, but returned to Scotland, and joined the Establishment. The ecclesiastic rulers viewed with a suspicious eye every one who had obtained an English licence, and wished to put a stop to the practice. I have no doubt that among other reasons, this was the chief cause of selecting Mr. G. and deposing him rather than any of the other five.

\* This letter was communicated to me by John Waugh, Esq. Mr. Hogg's grandson. It is printed entire, and contains a most striking illustration of the unaffected piety of its excellent author. It may be necessary to mention that Mr. Hogg and Mr. Gillespie had been early friends.



“DEAR SIR,—With a heart full of sorrow, at Mr. Thomas’s desire I write you. If ever there was a time that the Lord was calling us to weeping and mourning and fasting, surely it is now. An assembly has been brought up here, consisting of members, a great majority of whom is disposed as we could wish. But though we have numbers and strength, the anger of the Lord has divided us, and union of councils has been wofully awanting. Yesterday it was intended to bring in first the general overtures for preventing future severities. But unhappily it was agreed at a thin meeting of the committee of overtures, that the General Assembly should begin with the petition from Carnock parish for reponing Mr. Gillespie. The affair being brought into the General Assembly yesterday forenoon, Mr. Adam, who opened the cause, endeavoured to prove that the proceedings at last General Assembly were arbitrary, illegal, and informal, and that as our supreme court was limited in their power by laws and forms, when they broke through these, they assumed a power which did not belong to them. Mr. Scot of Dumfries argued in much the same way, and both seemed to point at this conclusion, that Mr. Gillespie’s affair should not be taken in on the foot of the petitions, but rather that we should begin with considering the nature of our constitution, and in consequence of this declare the proceedings of last General Assembly void and null. Several cried out that Mr. Adam and Mr. Scot were wandering from the point in debate, and thus stopt both from coming to a point, and proposing an overture. The bulk, however, of the moderate side thought this

scheme dangerous, as General Assembly 1754 have as good a right to annul our proceedings, as we have to annul these of last General Assembly. At last the vote was put, *Repone* Mr. Gillespie or *Not*, and it carried *Not* by a majority of three. Mr. Adam and Mr. Scot scrupling this state of the vote, for the reason mentioned above, voted *Go on*, and were imitated by two or three honest ministers and elders. Some few others who at bottom wished Mr. Gillespie reponed, and would have voted it on the slightest application, or even on a signed declaration of his willingness to return to the Church of Scotland, and parish of Carnock, voted *Not*, because there was no application. Mr. Boswell of Affleck went out a little before the votes, not thinking it so near, and Mr. Hutchison of Innerlilte was obliged to leave the Assembly House with indisposition. These are melancholy tokens that God is hiding his face from us. Jealousies have arisen among those united in the same end, which I'm afraid will not easily be removed. Our only relief is to look to him who made the seven stars and Orion, and can turn the shadow of death to a joyful morning. God will arise and have mercy on Zion, though the set time to favour her may not be yet come. Many have hopes that after all we will carry the general overtures. But as good Archbishop Leighton said, 'I think our wisdom is to cease from man, and look for no help till we look more upward, and dispute and discourse less, and fast and pray more, and so draw down our relief from the God of order and peace, who made the heavens and earth.'

"I'm sorry I must leave the town before your return. Begging a remembrance in your prayers for

myself, my family, and congregation, and the poor divided corner where providence has cast my lot, I remain, dear Sir, your affectionate and humble servant,

Jo. ERSKINE.

31st May 1753."

This letter is the more singular that it was written by the grandson of the patron of the church of Carnock. Were any proof necessary, it contains sufficient evidence that those who favoured Mr. Gillespie were in general not men of business. The popular party in the church were not then, and have never been since, so closely united together as the moderate party. This ought not to be ascribed to any difference in the views which they each took of the doctrine or discipline of the church, but to the capital defect of the want of a leader.

To explain this, it is necessary to observe that he who aspires to be a leader in the General Assembly, must have it in his power to be returned a member every year. Now, generally speaking, he is deprived of this unless he be a member of some university, that is, either be a Principal or Professor in one of those seminaries, independently of his being one of the clergy, and holding a living in the established church. The history of the proceedings of the supreme ecclesiastical court affords a strong confirmation of this remark. From the year 1638 (when it first met) to 1810 inclusive, there have been one hundred and thirty-one sessions, and during that period there have been no fewer than fifty-two persons moderators of assembly, who were connected with the universities, seventeen of whom were Principals, and thirty-five Professors.

One cannot help being astonished how nearly equal the votes were, and upon how small a pivot the decision of this question moved. Neither Mr. Gillespie nor those who had advocated his cause, made any future effort to have him restored to the bosom of the church, or to the parish of Carnock. His friends and admirers retired quietly from the contest, and built a chapel for him in Dunfermline. Here he continued to preach till his death, which happened in the year 1774.

Meanwhile the question of patronage, instead of being set at rest was more keenly agitated than ever, and a very numerous class of the population of Scotland, who considered it as a grievance, were determined to oppose it, and so violently was the opposition sometimes carried, that it was found necessary to employ a military force for the protection of the clergy who were present at the ordination of a presentee, and this too in the immediate vicinity of Edinburgh.

The first remarkable instance, however, in which the Assembly interfered, happened in the year 1758. Upon a vacancy taking place in Jedburgh, the patronage of which is in the gift of the Crown, the magistrates of the burgh, and the parish in general, petitioned to have the Rev. Thomas Boston,\* then at Oxnam, for their minister, but were refused. So keenly was this resented, that the magistrates, instead of giving their attendance at the parish church, repaired in a body to hear Mr. Boston. They built a chapel for him in the town of Jedburgh, and he of course demitted his charge of the parish of Oxnam.

\* Son of the well-known author of the *Fourfold State*, of the same name, minister of Ettrick.

The measures of Dr. Robertson were again carried, and Mr. Boston was deposed in terms nearly similar to what had been used in regard to Mr. Gillespie.

Nothing of importance took place in the Assembly for some years respecting the law of patronage. The popular preaching of Gillespie and Boston, however, who had now become the founders of a party hostile to it, gained great accession of strength among the multitude, and at last in February 1766 they were joined by the Rev. James Baine, minister of the High Church of Paisley, by far the most popular clergyman then in the west of Scotland.

What tended greatly to increase the ferment which had arisen, was the knowledge that measures were in agitation to erect a chapel in Edinburgh, of which, according to common report, Mr. Baine was to be the minister. The Assembly of 1765 had appointed a committee to consider of an overture which had been made relative to the causes and growth of schism. The object which it had in view was the consideration of the law of patronage. It had originated with the popular clergy, and was generally considered as a preliminary step towards its total repeal. The principal subjects contained in the report of the committee, and which were recommended to the deliberation of the Assembly, were, 1. To remit to presbyteries to inquire into the number of meeting-houses within their bounds. And, 2. To inquire respecting the abuse of the right of patronage, and to appoint a committee to correspond with presbyteries, and gentlemen of property, for remedying so great an evil.

No debate which had ever come before the As-

sembly excited so general interest. Dr. Robertson, who was now the acknowledged leader of those in the church who opposed the overture, had a very difficult part to act. The utmost zeal and activity had pervaded the whole church to get members sent up to the Assembly who should favour the proposed overture ; and they had succeeded beyond their own expectation. All their chief speakers had been elected, and I have been assured upon good authority, were confident of a favourable issue.

Mr. Baine had given in his demission to the presbytery of Paisley as early as the 10th of February, but his co-presbyters, in tenderness to him, had declined coming to any decision respecting it. The magistrates, who are the patrons, presented Mr. George Muir to what they affirmed ought to be considered as a vacancy, and upon repairing to the usual place of meeting, they found that no presbytery had assembled ; they therefore protested to the synod of Glasgow and Ayr. The presbytery appealed from the sentence of the synod to the Assembly. Dr. Robertson and his friends considered it of the utmost importance that this cause should be discussed on as early a day as possible, and had resolved to follow it up with a motion to depose Mr. Baine. This was chiefly done with a view to feel the pulse of the Assembly, and to make trial of the strength of his party, preparatory to the discussion of the great point to which both sides of the church looked forward with such anxiety. After various discussions, which it is unnecessary to mention, Mr. Baine was deposed upon the 29th of May by a majority of 107 to 56. It appears from the pamphlets publish-

ed on the occasion, that independently of other arguments, Dr. Robertson laid great stress upon Mr. Baine being admitted a minister among *the presbytery of Relief*, (that is relief from patronage,) by Mr. Gillespie, who had been deposed by the General Assembly.

Upon Friday the 30th, the Assembly-House was crowded at an early hour, in the full expectation of a very interesting debate. The Earl of Glasgow, the king's Commissioner, came to the court at 10 o'clock. The popular party had been successful in the choice of a moderator, eighty-three having voted for Mr. John Hamilton of Glasgow, and seventy-eight for principal Murison of St. Andrews, this consequently gave them great courage, and the votes being so nearly equal, not only the public mind, but even the parties themselves entertained doubts respecting the conclusion of the contest.

The first speaker was the Rev. Mr. Cupples, who treated the subject ironically. What impression he made I have not learned, neither have I been able to ascertain the exact order in which those spoke who managed the debate.

Principal Tullidolph of St. Andrews is represented to have made a most excellent speech against receiving the overture, but from the infirmities of old age he was not so distinctly heard as could have been wished.

The late Lord Melville, though he had only been three years at the bar, had received from the crown, a few weeks before, the appointment of Solicitor-General for Scotland. Government had espoused the cause, and he entered with all the fire and ardour

of youth into it, and delivered one of the most animated orations against the overture that was ever spoken in that Court. The Assembly-House was not then fitted up as it is now. The galleries of the church were crowded, and Mr. Dundas, in the course of his speech, expressed his satisfaction that so many were present, and hoped that the decision of that day would show the multitude that the laws must be obeyed, and that the sanction of the General Assembly would prove to them, that they need expect no assistance from that quarter; therefore their best plan would be to acquiesce in the law of patronage.

The Solicitor was answered by the well known Colin Campbell, minister of Renfrew, whose fund of satire and sarcastic humour was inexhaustible. His appearance greatly pleased the Assembly, for they immediately laid their account with receiving some amusement, which would relieve them from the fatigue of a long sederunt, and the inconveniences of a very crowded house. This old gentleman spoke in the broad Scots dialect, which even then gave a peculiar oddness to his manner. He was a man of great natural shrewdness—and it was not his practice to spare any of his opponents, though he was notwithstanding a man of a singularly humane and benevolent disposition. It was upon this occasion that he said, in allusion to the high tone which the Solicitor-General had assumed, “That he would make a *bra* tent preacher, and wished they had him.” Many of his observations in the course of his speeches in the Assembly are still remembered by the few survivors who were his con-

That is, excellent



temporaries. He had little or no pretensions to eloquence in the most extensive acceptation of that word. He nevertheless always made an impression on the house, and many of his opponents sat very uneasy under the lash of his satire.

The Rev. Mr. Freebairn, minister of Dunbarton, and a co-presbyter with Mr. Campbell, made a conspicuous figure upon this occasion. During the short time that he actively engaged in church politics, he was esteemed the chief support of the popular party. Of a bold and intrepid spirit, he feared no man. He avowed the principles upon which he acted, in the most public and undisguised manner, and whatever opinion the moderate party might entertain of his principles, they had no doubts concerning the honesty of his intentions, and the integrity of his character.

Dr. Robertson's opinion of Mr. Freebairn's character was shown upon a very interesting occasion. It discovered a very amiable trait in the temper of the Principal, and for the honour of human nature deserves to be mentioned. Mr. Freebairn was cut off in the prime of life, and left a widow and family to bewail his loss. Being left in limited circumstances, she was advised to repair to Edinburgh with her children, and by honourable industry endeavour to provide for herself and family. No sooner was Dr. Robertson informed of her situation than he took the earliest opportunity of waiting upon her, condoled with her upon the loss she had sustained in being bereaved of so valuable a husband—proffered his services to assist her in any way she could point out—and by his patronage and numerous acquaint-

ance, was ultimately of the most essential benefit to her. One delights to dwell upon such rare instances of the exercise of the benevolent affections. Though he differed materially from her husband in the view he had taken of ecclesiastic affairs, yet he respected the man, and willingly paid an honourable tribute to the memory of a political antagonist.

Mr. Freebairn's eloquence was of a very superior kind. Professor D. Stewart, when speaking of him, characterises it, "as the powerful, though coarse invective of *Freebairn*, whose name would, in a different age, have been transmitted to posterity with those of the rustic and intrepid Apostles who freed their country from the hierarchy of Rome." It was impassioned in the extreme. Its impetuosity hurried on his hearers like a torrent, without affording them time to consider the subject calmly and deliberately. Few men have possessed talents which fitted them to lead a popular assembly equal to Mr. Freebairn.

But the person who in many respects was the most formidable opponent Dr. Robertson ever had to encounter, was Andrew Crosbie, Esq. Vice Dean of the Faculty of Advocates. This gentleman, who had often distinguished himself in the Assembly by his eloquence, made a most splendid figure in the discussion of the "Schism overture." The subject itself was admirably adapted to the style of his eloquence. He had espoused the popular side of the question, and perhaps no public character in Scotland of the last century possessed a greater fund of copious illustration. He was at the head of his profession at the bar. His genius, however, was not limited to the explanation of the intricacies of the

law. A popular assembly was the theatre upon which he was chiefly fitted to shine. There the ardour of his susceptible mind, accompanied with great fluency of expression and fervency of manner, appeared to advantage, and never failed to produce a powerful effect upon his audience. The impression which had been made upon the Assembly by the supporters of the overture was strongly felt; and as the debate had been prolonged to an unusual length, it now seemed to be the proper season for Dr. Robertson, as the leader of the moderate party, to deliver his sentiments, sum up the arguments on both sides, and conclude by a motion, by which the question would be speedily brought to an issue.

Meanwhile an event happened in the Assembly-House which affected in a surprising degree every one who was present, but particularly Dr. Robertson. His intimate friend, Dr. John Jardine, one of the ministers of the Tron Church, having been present to hear the debates on the overture, (though not a member,) and to appearance in his ordinary state of health, dropt down at once, never spoke, and was carried home dead. This, as might be expected, greatly unhinged both parties.

It is universally admitted that Dr. Robertson never acquitted himself to greater advantage as a public speaker than on this occasion. The Assembly, as has been mentioned, did not then possess the same excellent accommodation which they now possess for holding their meetings. In order, therefore, to have the full command of his audience, he procured a stool to stand on, and in the course of a long speech, laid down, with uncommon clearness and precision

of language, what was the law of the land, and stated the propriety and necessity of rendering obedience to it. He pointed out the intimate connection between the law of patronage and the existence of a national church, and forcibly argued that the one could not be secure without the other. He vindicated the right which every British subject enjoyed to worship God according to his conscience—to erect or to attend whatsoever place of worship he might think proper—and if he chose, to call any one to be his clergyman from any sect, after any form, or upon any conditions which the parties might agree on. But such latitude could not be tolerated in a national church. He then answered with great animation the arguments of his opponents, treated their objections with the greatest respect—expressed his conviction of the purity of their motives, but concluded with moving that the overture should be rejected. It was agreed that the state of the vote should be, “*Approve or Reject*, and it carried *Reject* 99 to 85.

This majority must be admitted to have been very trifling, and affords a strong proof of the delicate part which he had to act, and of the fortitude and address requisite to manage a party who had to encounter such a formidable opposition. One cannot help also contrasting the warfare in which he was then engaged, with the calm and tranquil appearance which the General Assembly now presents, when (chiefly by means of his exertions) that party in the church, of which he may be considered as the founder, have become completely triumphant, and the popular clergy have given up even the shadow of opposition to patronage. When a presentee is not ac-

ceptable to a parish, the only effect it produces is the erection of a dissenting meeting-house, in connection with one of the three great bodies of presbyterian dissenters in Scotland, the burgher, the anti-burgher, or the synod of relief;\* and the cause seldom or never comes before the Assembly.

The discussion on the *Schism Overture*, established Dr. Robertson's character as a leader, more than any appearance he had ever made. All parties admitted the eloquence and admirable address which he discovered in the course of the debate. But those who acted with him, have spoken with enthusiastic admiration of this speech,—have declared that he even excelled himself; and some of them have gone the length of affirming, that such a speech was never before delivered. From this time, he reigned without a rival, and was ever after considered as the undisputed leader of the moderate party.

As the discussion respecting *Patronage* was what first brought Dr. Robertson into the notice of the public, and that which finally established his reputation as a political leader in the Assembly,—and as there is no full account, as far as I know, of the interest he took in this important question to be found, I have studied to be more particular in the narration of the facts, than I should otherwise have considered to be necessary. I also thought it preferable to present, at one view, a statement of the whole case, not regarding exactly the order of chronology in the life of Dr. Robertson.

It was in the year 1751, as has been mentioned,

\* There are at present in Scotland about 380 Meeting-houses of the Secession, and 86 of the Relief.

that he made his first appearance in the General Assembly; and for many years afterwards, the transactions of that venerable court engrossed a considerable degree of his attention. But he never permitted these, nor any other avocation, to interrupt the ardour of his application to improve himself in elegant learning. Among other means to promote a taste for literature in the Scottish metropolis, which had been resorted to, various societies had, from time to time, been instituted for the cultivation, both of the art of composition and improvement in public speaking. The most distinguished institution of this kind, was the *Select Society*, which met for the first time, in the Advocates' Library, in May 1754. It had been originally projected by Mr. Allan Ramsay the portrait painter, only son of the author of the "Gentle Shepherd." In a short time, the members became so numerous, as to include almost all the "literati" about Edinburgh.

Dr. Robertson was an early member of this society, and took a very active part in conducting its business. Here he had an opportunity of entering the lists in debate, with those who afterwards made a distinguished figure in life, some of them as authors, and others as statesmen and public speakers in the great councils of the nation. We are informed by Dr. Carlyle, that the chief speakers "were Sir Gilbert Elliot, Mr. Wedderburn, (afterwards Lord Chancellor,) Lord Alesford, Lord Kames, Mr. Walter Stewart, Lord Elbank, and Dr. Robertson." They were afterwards joined by the amiable Mr. David Wilkie, then minister of the parish of Ratho, and afterwards professor of ecclesiastical history of St. An-

draws. All these gentlemen possessed uncommon talents for debate, and as long as they gave their attendance, we may rest assured that both the spirit and usefulness of the society were not relaxed. Mr. David Hume, Dr. Smith, Dr. Blair, Dr. Ferguson, and Mr. John Home, lent their assistance in a different way, because from diffidence they never ventured to address the Society.

No literary association in Scotland ever produced an equal number of works of the highest merit in different walks of literature, as issued from the press, by the members of the *Select Society*. After the institution had flourished for about a twelvemonth, the plan of a *Review* was projected to be published at Edinburgh. Two numbers only made their appearance, and were published in July and December 1755. Upon the authority of the late Lord Craig, we are informed that "the Review of *Gordon's History of Peter the Great*, was written by Dr. Robertson, as was likewise that of *Anderson's History of Cræsus, King of Lydia*. Dr. Hugh Blair wrote the Review of the *Fourth Volume of Dodsley's Collection of Poems*. Dr. John Jardine was the Reviewer of *Ebenezer Erskine's Sermons*, and *Johnston's Sermon on Unity*, &c. Adam Smith, besides the Review of *Johnson's Dictionary*, wrote the *Letter to the Authors of the Review*, recommending their giving an account of *French Literature*: and exhibiting an able specimen of such an account. Mr. James Russell, surgeon, afterwards Professor of Natural Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, wrote several articles; probably the reviews of medical, anatomical, and physical works. The preface to the Review,

which contains the plan of the Journal, was written by Mr. Alexander Wedderburn, advocate, (afterwards Lord Chancellor Loughborough, and Earl of Rosslyn;) and a few of the short articles, containing accounts of law-publications, are supposed to be likewise of his writing.\*

The *Edinburgh Review*, however, was not successful, notwithstanding the distinguished talents of the contributors. Dr. Jardine's Reviews of Erskine and Johnston's Sermons, gave great offence. Perhaps they were too severe. They, however, excited such a sensation in the public mind, that the authors found it convenient to withdraw quietly from observation, and relinquish their plan. It is worthy of being remarked, that the Reviews attributed to Dr. Robertson were of historical works, and that to each author the Review of such productions was assigned, as seemed to correspond with the general course of his studies. Besides the severity of some of the articles, other reasons may be mentioned, as causes for its want of success. Such publications were in a great measure unknown in Scotland. It was a new species of employment to the critics themselves, and the teasing detail of arranging and editing a Review, was not likely to be long submitted to, by persons who had so many other objects which required their attention. The work itself is now become very scarce. Some of the papers, however, are inserted in the Scots Magazine.

It was in the course of the same year, 1755, that Dr. Robertson first publicly appeared as an author.

\* Lord Woodhouselee's Life of Kames; Supplement, p. 15.



That excellent institution, the Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, has, since its foundation, been always in the practice of having an annual sermon preached in Edinburgh, immediately upon the rising of the General Assembly. The persons fixed upon to perform that duty, are usually selected from the most eminent clergymen in the church of Scotland ; and it is always esteemed as reflecting honour upon him who is appointed to the office. Dr. Robertson was at this time only a young man, but he had already distinguished himself both in the church courts, and as an eloquent preacher ; and in the discharge of this task imposed upon him, he acquitted himself to the satisfaction of all, and added new laurels to his fame.

The subject which he chose to discuss at this time, was “ the situation of the world at the time of Christ’s appearance, and its connection with the success of his religion.” It is universally allowed by all competent judges, to be a masterly discourse, and affords a proof of what he could have accomplished as a writer of sermons, had he been so inclined. It has gone through a considerable number of editions, and is well known on the Continent.

The Rev. John Home, minister of Athelstaneford, in East Lothian, published his celebrated tragedy of Douglas, in the year 1757. The circumstance of his being a clergyman of the established church, and particularly the acknowledged fact, that several of his brethren were present at its performance, for the first time, in the Edinburgh theatre, produced a great sensation in Scotland. Even Mr. Home’s friends were not prepared to answer all the objections which

were then urged against theatrical exhibitions. This kind of amusement has now become much more common, and many persons who retain the same religious principles with those who formerly opposed the lawfulness of indulging in such entertainments, frequent the playhouse.

Solemn dramas were quite common at the time of the Reformation. But then they were almost always taken from the Holy Scriptures, that is, the incidents which were introduced, or what by critics is called the *fable*, was borrowed from divine revelation. At the revival of learning, not only the Greek tragedians, but even the comedies of Aristophanes were taught in the schools; so were the comedies of Terence, and more rarely those of Plautus. It was a common practice for the students to engage in the representation of some of those plays, though it must be allowed, that this seems rather to have proceeded from the idea, that it would greatly contribute to their familiar acquaintance with the learned languages.

As soon, however, as the performing of plays became a separate profession, even being present to witness such exhibitions, was then esteemed to be not strictly consistent with the Christian character. It is in consequence of this, that in England no bishop ever enters within the walls of a playhouse. The same order of clergy in Roman Catholic countries, are equally attentive to show a similar example. And at a very early period, players of every description were refused the benefit of Christian burial in France. It cannot be denied, that this was effected by means of the clergy; but the misconduct of the players themselves, and the immoral tendency of

many of the pieces which were brought upon the stage, gave to the prohibition the sanction of multitudes who were not in the priesthood.

There is but one opinion respecting the merit of the tragedy of Douglas. Since the time that it was first represented on the stage, it has maintained its station, and still is what is called a *stock* play. The subject of this drama was happily chosen; and to a Scotsman, perhaps none in the whole compass of Scottish history, could have been found to possess superior, if equal charms. It was objected to it, however, and with some reason it must be confessed, that it had a tendency to encourage suicide. But this was not assigned as the chief reason of opposition. Stage-plays of every description were described as immoral; and the pernicious consequences of clergymen encouraging such profane amusements, were powerfully insisted on.

The most formidable opposition which it received from the press, was a small treatise, published by the celebrated Dr. Witherspoon, in which he combated the morality of stage-plays, and entered very fully into the merits of the abstract question. To those who entertain the same sentiments with him, respecting the doctrines of Christianity, it has always appeared to be unanswerable. And if you grant his premises, so it is. More than one half of the *clergy* of the church of Scotland, perfectly agreed with Dr. Witherspoon; and the principal support which Mr. Home received, was from the lay elders of the church. No wonder, then, that the publication of "Douglas" produced such a ferment throughout the kingdom. The business was immediately brought

before the church courts, and carried on with great violence on both sides. As all ecclesiastical causes must, according to the constitution of the church of Scotland, originate with the presbytery where the moral character of a clergyman is concerned, Dr. Robertson had every opportunity of defending his friend. They were both members of the presbytery of Haddington. After a great deal of discussion before that court, it was carried to the synod, and from the synod to the General Assembly. Dr. Robertson, with his accustomed moderation, defended his friends; but he stood in a very different situation from them. He had promised to his father, never to enter the door of a playhouse; and that promise, he added, "I have religiously kept; and it is my intention to keep it, till the day of my death."

This tragedy, however, was the cause of so great contention in the church, and animosity in private, that Mr. Home thought proper to resign his living, and consequently escaped the censure of the church. His brethren, however, who had been present at the representation of the play, were not treated with similar lenity. Six were rebuked before the presbyteries to which they belonged, and Mr. White of Libberton was suspended for a short period, from the exercise of his ministerial functions.\* It has been universally admitted, that the lenity with which they

\* There were seven clergymen present at the representation besides Mr. Home himself. These were John Steel of Stair; Francis Scott of Weststruther; George Cupples of Swinton; William Home of Polwart, afterwards Mr. Home's father-in-law; Thomas White of Libberton; Alexander Carlyle of Inveresk, and Professor Ferguson, who was an ordained clergyman, having been, as has been mentioned, a chaplain in the army, but at this time librarian of the Advocates' Library.

were treated, was chiefly in consequence of the conciliating, yet firm manner in which they were defended by Dr. Robertson. If Mr. Home had not taken the step which he did, I entertain little doubt, that if not deposed, some very severe censure would have been inflicted upon him.

I know very little of Mr. Home's early history. He was educated at the University of Edinburgh, and had formed an early intimacy with Dr. Robertson, which continued uninterrupted till the death of the latter. Like the Doctor, he entered himself as a volunteer in 1745; and they adopted precisely the same measures during that turbulent period. When far advanced in life, he published a History of the Rebellion. He published several other plays, besides that of Douglas; but they were unsuccessful, and formed a striking contrast in this respect, to the universal popularity of his first performance. This induced some of his enemies to affirm, that its chief merit ought not to be ascribed to him; but for this there appears to be no foundation. They have named Lord Elibank, with whom he lived in habits of the most unreserved intimacy; so much so, that he spent the greatest part of his time with his Lordship during the eleven years that he was minister at Athelstaneford. He did not live in the manse, but occupied a small lodging during the short term of his visits to the parish. After leaving the church, he entered into the Dutch service; but how long he continued, I know not. He had evidently given up all thoughts of the ministry, or of conformity to the common customs of clergymen in this country; for, when upon a visit to Scotland, during the sitting

of the General Assembly, he entered that venerable court, in his regimentals, and his sword by his side.

In the month of April 1764, he was appointed conservator of Scots privileges in the Netherlands, by his Britannic Majesty, and received his commission under the Great Seal of Scotland. He had been warmly recommended to this office, by the convention of royal burghs. His general residence after this, was at Campvere.

The interest which Dr. Robertson took in this business, and the distinguished figure which he made, in the course of the various debates respecting it, added greatly to his reputation as a public speaker, and also increased his influence among his friends; so that he saw speedy preferment in the church within his reach. But though a great deal of his time must have been consumed in attention to the affairs of the church, it must not be imagined that he neglected other studies of far superior importance, and in the result of which, the public were much more interested.

Shortly after his settlement at Gladsmuir he is represented as having turned his attention to that important period of Scottish history which occupied the reign of Mary Queen of Scots. The era itself was certainly exceedingly interesting, as not only involving a variety of political transactions, but also the earliest dawns of the Reformation in Scotland. The course of his own reading respecting one of the most eventful periods of the history of his native country early attracted his attention. Independently of this I have been assured on the authority of the late Rev.

Mr. Macaulay of Queensferry, that Dr. Robertson's father had been engaged for a considerable number of years in investigating the same subject. Though he appears never to have arranged any materials for publication, yet this very circumstance could not fail of exciting Dr. Robertson's curiosity to inquire more carefully than he had yet done, into that part of the History of Scotland which had occupied so much of the attention of a father for whose memory he entertained so sincere a regard. The events which respect Mary's personal history alone are objects of comparatively little importance. How interesting soever a character she may have been, and how diversified soever her lot was, these circumstances can only be considered as of great importance as they stand related to the origin, progress, and accomplishment of the glorious work of the Reformation of Religion in Scotland. The controversies in regard to her, will be found principally to bear upon this point, and according as the authors who have written concerning her have adopted the principles of episcopacy or presbyterianism, in the same proportion have they vindicated or blamed the unfortunate Queen. Thus while her beauty and other accomplishments might have been but secondary objects of attention, and considered merely as fitting her for the high station she occupied, the connection which her history has with the Reformation has insensibly drawn those who have engaged in the controversy, to the discussion of particular facts regarding her life which would otherwise have excited little or no curiosity.

Dr. Robertson's correspondence with Lord Hailes affords the only *data* from which any accurate infor-

mation can be obtained respecting his progress in writing the *History of Scotland*. From this it appears that in the year 1753 he had begun the composition of his work, and that in 1757 he had advanced so far as Gowrie's conspiracy. The truth seems to be that the work had received his last corrections about the beginning of 1758, and that he had come to the resolution of publishing it in London.

For this purpose he accordingly set out on a journey to the capital, but previously to this he obtained the degree of Doctor in Divinity from the University of Edinburgh. His publisher was the celebrated Mr. Andrew Millar, then at the head of his profession, a Scotsman also, and whose father had been minister of Paisley, and was author of a church history. Mr. Strahan the printer, a native of Edinburgh, was conjunct proprietor with Mr. Millar. These two gentlemen, besides entering into a liberal engagement with him, introduced him to the most celebrated literary characters in London. Here, notwithstanding the coarseness of his pronunciation, which Walpole declared he hardly understood, his good sense and the charms of his conversation speedily spread his fame throughout an extensive circle, composed of persons who were best qualified to estimate his merits. After having arranged what was necessary in regard to the publication he returned to Scotland.

At last "*the History*" was published upon the 1st of February 1759. The cause of this delay chiefly proceeded from the arrangement which had been made that each sheet as it was printed was transmitted to him by post for correction. No work perhaps was ever



given to the public which was received with such unbounded applause by men of all parties. The moderation, impartiality, judgment, and good writing which it exhibited struck every one who perused it; and in less than a month he was informed by his bookseller that it would be necessary for him to set about preparing for a second edition. It has now been nearly seventy years before the public, and still maintains that reputation which it acquired at its first publication. It does not enter into our plan to attempt a critique of the work, or to discuss the numerous controverted points of history which it contains. It may be necessary however to observe, that the first work which appeared in 1759, and may be considered as an answer to Dr. Robertson, was written by Mr. William Tytler, entitled "An Inquiry into the Evidence against Mary Queen of Scots." This author had espoused very opposite sentiments respecting the conduct of the Queen from our historian. His work is written with great acuteness, and throughout the whole controversy not a single expression escapes him which has the least tendency to excite irritation. He chiefly follows Goodal, whose "Examination of Mary's Letters, &c." had been published in 1754.

Notwithstanding the critical examination to which this work was subjected it still kept its ground. The author declined making any formal reply, though he considered calmly and with attention any information that was communicated, from whatever quarter it came. The controversy respecting Mary had not been publicly agitated for a considerable time, when in the year 1782, the celebrated Dr. Gilbert Stuart

renewed it with all his characteristical violence, in "The History of Scotland from the establishment of the Reformation to the death of Queen Mary."

This unfortunate person was undoubtedly a man of talents. He was the son of Professor George Stuart, of whom some account has been already given,\* and was born at Edinburgh in 1742. He distinguished himself at a very early period of life by his Dissertation on the British Constitution. This raised his fame so high that before he had completed his twenty-second year, the university of Edinburgh conferred upon him the degree of LL.D., an honour which they seldom bestow upon any one, but especially upon so young a man.

According to his own account, which he took an early opportunity of publishing, his Majesty's government had promised to confer the professorship of the law of nature and nations upon him, but in this he was disappointed, which he ascribed solely to the interference of Principal Robertson. This excited in Stuart's mind the most rooted malice and rancorous hatred of Dr. Robertson. The whole bent of his studies, and almost all the works he published after this disappointment, may be viewed as attacks upon the writings of Dr. Robertson. Though he had the preposterous vanity to speak contemptuously of the Principal's understanding, yet the very circumstance of the numerous and virulent attacks of which he was the author, afford the most certain proofs of the real respect which he entertained both of his talents and of his writings.

The motives which actuated Dr. Robertson cannot

\* *Vide* vol. ii. p. 333.

fail of receiving the approbation of every good man. Dr. Stuart's habits of licentiousness and dissipation had become so notorious in Edinburgh, that they were the subject of very general conversation. As the head of the University therefore, he esteemed it to be his duty to use his influence in preventing Dr. Stuart's succession to the chair. This was what gave him so great offence, though he had no one to blame but himself.

About four years after the appearance of Stuart's work, Mr. Whitaker entered the lists on the same side of the question, and if possible showed greater keenness in defence of Mary's cause than Stuart. The work certainly discovers considerable acuteness of remark, but the violent party spirit with which it is written, together with the affectation of the style, forms a striking contrast to that of Dr. Robertson.\*

The success which attended the publication of "The History of Scotland" had a great effect upon his future fortunes in life. In 1759 he was appointed chaplain of Stirling Castle. In 1761 one of his Majesty's chaplains in ordinary for Scotland. In 1762, Principal of the University of Edinburgh, and in 1764, the King's historiographer for Scotland, an office which was revived in his favour.

The circumstances which accompanied his appointment to the principality were the following. Upon the death of Dr Goldie the patrons were anxi-

\* In a letter to Mr. Gibbon, Dr. Robertson thus expresses himself:—"You will see that I have got in Mr. Whitaker an adversary so bigotted and zealous, that though I have denied no article of faith, and am at least as orthodox as himself, yet he rails against me with all the asperity of theological hatred. I shall adhere to my fixed maxim of making no reply."—Gibbon's Miscel. Works, vol. ii. p. 417.

ous to provide a successor who should be fully qualified to discharge the duties of Principal of the University. There was but one opinion as to the person to whom it ought to be offered. Dr. Robertson's character and talents were not only known to his friends, but his fame had already spread throughout the British empire, by the publication of the *History of Scotland*. He was accordingly elected upon the 10th of March 1762.

In the absence of the Lord Provost, "Bailie James Stuart reported that upon Monday evening he caused summon a committee of the whole council, and informed them that it would be proper to proceed on Wednesday to the choice of a fit person to supply the vacancy in the University by the death of the late Principal Goldie. That after talking over the matter, the whole members present unanimously agreed that Dr. William Robertson was a most proper person to supply that important office; and the magistrates agreed to take the *avisamentum* of the reverend ministers upon Tuesday. Accordingly they having met with the magistrates, and Bailie Stuart having informed them that the council was to proceed at their next meeting to make choice of the Rev. Dr. Robertson to be Principal of the University, and desired to know if they had any relevant objection, when the reverend ministers declared that they had none, and that they thought Dr. Robertson fully qualified for discharging the duties of that important trust."

"Thereafter the magistrates and council, &c. considering that the office of Principal of this city's University is vacant, and at their disposal by and through

the decease of the Rev. John Goldie, late principal thereof, and that it is necessary and expedient the same be supplied with a fit person—and being well satisfied with the fitness, abilities, and qualifications of the Rev. Dr. W. R., one of the ministers of this city, to supply and discharge the aforesaid office, and of his loyalty and affection to his Majesty's person and government, Therefore did, and hereby do, with and under the condition, provision and reservation after mentioned, elect and choose the said Dr. W. R. into the office of Principal of the said university, giving and granting to him during his continuance therein, the salary thereto belonging, that was usually paid to the said Rev. Mr. Goldie, to commence and grow due from and after the term of Martinmas next to come, and to be payable to him yearly at the terms of Whitsunday and Martinmas by equal portions, beginning the first term's payment at the term of Whitsunday 1763. Likewise giving and granting to the said Dr. W. R. with and under the reservation after-mentioned, the full use and possession of the lodging or house, with the orchard, in the same University, as the same was lately possessed by the said deceased Dr. John Goldie, commencing his entry to the said house and orchard, at and against the term of Whitsunday next, 1762, and that during his continuance in the said office ; but always with and under this express condition and provision, as it is hereby expressly provided and declared, that while Dr. W. R. shall continue to exercise the office of Principal of the College, and serve the cure of a minister of Edinburgh at the same time, he shall not be entitled to the sum of five hundred merks allowed each of the ministers

of this city for house rent, in respect he possesses a house as Principal of the College ; and further reserving, like as the council did and hereby do reserve to themselves and successors in office, full power and liberty to carry and cause make a street or passage through the said orchard, of such breadth as shall be judged proper and commodious for the improvement of the city. With and under which condition, provision and reservation, this present act and commission is made and granted, and no otherwise. And the said Dr. W. R. being called upon, appeared in council, accepted of the said office, and took the oath *de fidei*.”\*

It was sometime before he could fix upon the subject for another history. He appears to have been divided between the history of Greece, and that of Charles V. He at last determined to undertake the latter. From various causes, however, it did not make its appearance till 1769. The expectations of the public were raised to a very high pitch, and it is unnecessary to add, that they were not disappointed. According to the opinion of the best judges, and of Mr. Hume in particular, it excels, in a sensible degree, “The History of Scotland.” He had originally intended to include in this history the transactions of the Spaniards in the new world, but upon considering the extent of the subject, and how disproportionate an episode it would make to the general history, he determined to make it the subject of a separate work, and to include in it the transactions of all the European nations in America. He only published

\* Counc. Regist. vol. lxxvii. p. 134.

the first part, comprehending an account of the conquests of Mexico and Peru, and of the establishment of the Spanish colonies in the continent and islands of America. This was published in 1777, and was equally successful with the preceding. In 1787 the Abbé Clavigero's history of Mexico was translated into English, which contained various reflections that had a tendency to impeach Dr. Robertson's credit as an historian. He therefore determined to revise his work, and accordingly published in 1788 the result of his inquiries.

The American Revolution prevented the completion of his original design. He therefore suspended giving an account of the transactions of the British settlements in North America. A fragment of this intended work was preserved among his papers and published by his son.

In the year 1791 he gave to the public his last work, the "Disquisition concerning Ancient India." He was now in the sixty-ninth year of his age. Yet it showed the same vigour of mind, patience of research, and elegance of writing, that he exhibited in those performances which were composed in the prime of life.

In the month of June 1758 he was admitted one of the ministers of Edinburgh, and preferred to the charge of Lady Yester's Church. Here the field in which he was called upon to act was much more extensive than Gladsmuir. The students who attend college are accommodated in that church, and if I mistake not, there were also some of the professors in those days always present. He did not remain long in this situation, for about the year 1764, the

magistrates of Edinburgh presented him to the Old Greyfriars' Church. But, previous to this, one of the keenest contests ever agitated in Scotland, respecting the right of presentation, took place in Edinburgh.

The question which was then agitated, was not very different from the cause in which Dr. Robertson made his first conspicuous figure in the General Assembly. The Town Council of Edinburgh, it was admitted, were legitimate patrons, but according to established practice, the *General Session* of the city had been always consulted, and indeed, as appears from the papers which were given in, had often decided the point. In consequence of the success which accompanied Dr. Robertson's efforts to defend the rights of patrons before the Assembly upon former occasions, the magistrates of Edinburgh gained confidence, and trusting in a considerable degree to his co-operation and assistance, they ventured to give a presentation to the late Dr. John Drysdale, then minister of Kirkliston, without consulting the General Session. No objection whatever could be made to his doctrine or to his moral character, but he was not a popular preacher. He had been an early friend of Dr. Robertson's, and was a man of uncommon talents for business, besides being an elegant scholar. The process before the courts of law was carried on with unabated ardour on both sides. At last the House of Lords decided that the right of presentation was in the magistrates of the city. Mr. Drysdale was therefore inducted in due form, and the question for ever set at rest.

This decision, however, though far from being satisfactory to those who favoured the popular party in



the church, produced the effect of affording them an opportunity of gratifying their own inclination. It was the cause of the first Church of Relief from Patronage being erected in Edinburgh.

Dr. Drysdale was the most powerful coadjutor in the management of ecclesiastical politics that Dr. Robertson ever had. He was born in the town of Kirkcaldy, and was the school-fellow of the late Mr. Oswald of Dunnikier, and the celebrated Dr. Adam Smith, author of the *Wealth of Nations*, with both of whom he lived on terms of the greatest intimacy till the time of his death. In consequence of the infirm state of health of Dr. George Wishart, he was elected conjunct chief clerk of the General Assembly, through the interest of Dr. Robertson, and that party of the church of which he had now become the acknowledged leader. Ecclesiastical politics ran so high at that time that a man of Dr. Drysdale's business talents could not fail to be of the greatest service. Such general knowledge had he of the ministers and elders of the Church of Scotland, that, according to the testimony of the late Professor Dalzel, Dr. Drysdale, upon receiving the list of those who were returned as members to the General Assembly, could calculate almost with certainty how the votes would stand upon any question which was likely to involve the discussion of any controverted point. In short, Dr. Drysdale was the person who gave that shape to the business of *detail* in the General Assembly which it now possesses. He was twice raised to the dignity of being moderator of the Assembly (in 1773 and 1784) and was in every respect an able and most re-

spectable man. The University of Aberdeen conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Divinity in 1765. He died 16th of June 1788.

After Dr. Robertson had discharged the duties of his office as parish minister of the Old Greyfriars' for about three years, the late Rev. Dr. John Erskine became his colleague in July 1767. This most excellent man has published part of that sermon which he delivered upon the Sunday immediately subsequent to Dr. Robertson's death, and it has been universally admitted that it contains a graphical description of his character, as well as facts respecting his early history which we could have derived from no other source. An affectionate regard and esteem for each other was formed as early as the year 1737, and commenced from a fondness for the same studies. The attachment which subsisted between these two very eminent men was very extraordinary. Their sentiments upon some points of divinity differed. And in regard to ecclesiastical politics they were completely in opposition. Nevertheless such was their good sense and mutual esteem, that these circumstances never produced personal rancour or animosity. Dr. Erskine has only published part of Dr. Robertson's funeral sermon. But well do I recollect of the old man, unable to contain himself, copiously shedding tears when he was speaking of the character of him whom he called his "dear, dear colleague." The effect which it produced upon the audience was very remarkable.

Dr. Erskine was the oldest son of Mr. John Erskine, Professor of Scots Law in the University of Edinburgh, of whom a brief account has been given in

the former part of this history.\* The doctor had been designed for the law by his father, and the whole of the early part of his education had been conducted with a view to this. He himself, however, had received very early impressions of religion, and the study of divinity was much more agreeable to his inclination than that of law. He is understood to have suffered a good deal of opposition from his relations in consequence of the choice which he had made. But these at last were overcome. After going through the *trials* prescribed by the church, he was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Dunblane. He was admitted minister of Kirkintilloch in 1744; of the Collegiate Church of Culross in 1754; of the New Greyfriars', Edinburgh, in 1758; and of the Old Greyfriars' in 1767.

In all these different situations, the purity and integrity of his conduct as a minister of the Gospel was most exemplary. In every parish where he had laboured, he carried with him the affections of the people. This among other causes was one reason for his declining so frequently to accept of a collegiate charge in Edinburgh. Few ministers of the Church of Scotland, or indeed of any church or learned society, were so sound and general scholars as Dr. Erskine. His reading, though very extensive upon every subject connected with theology, was not alone confined to that, the most important of all branches of knowledge. Being very parsimonious of his time, he devoted it almost exclusively to study, and possessing an ample private fortune, he could indulge himself in the purchase of books which were far beyond the

\* Vid. vol. ii. p. 317.

reach of many of his brethren. The ardour of his mind was perhaps scarcely ever exceeded. To gratify this passion for knowledge, he, without the assistance of a teacher, made himself master of the Dutch and German languages, when at a very advanced period of life. His correspondence, not only with divines throughout the British dominions, but on the Continent, in America, and it may be added, throughout the known world, was most extensive. From these sources of information, he at all times possessed the earliest and most correct information of what was going forward in the literary and religious world. Of these stores he was no niggard, for nothing gave him more pleasure than to communicate the intelligence he had received to his friends, and sometimes to the public, though this he did with that becoming modesty and Christian meekness which constituted such characteristic features in his whole conduct.

Though moderation, humility, and other kindred amiable qualities shone conspicuous in this good man, he was, notwithstanding, naturally of a keen temper. In the church courts, particularly in the General Assembly, when he happened to be a member, he took an active part in the debates, and was for many years considered as the head of the party to which he was attached. It was a rare occurrence to see two colleague ministers, each at the head of the two parties, into which the Church of Scotland has been long divided, discussing the different controverted points with keenness, and, in general, taking very opposite views of the same subject, and yet living in perfect harmony with each other, which was not only manifested on every private, but upon public occasions during the ardour of debate.

The following authentic anecdote, so characteristic of both these eminent men, will, I hope, not be considered as out of place.—In the Assembly of 1777, if I mistake not, Dr. Erskine was a member, and upon the discussion of a motion in which both parties were much interested, the Doctor rose to deliver his sentiments, and was proceeding with great fervour and eloquence, when he suddenly stopped short in the middle of a sentence and sat down. He apologized to the Assembly, and informed them that he was subject sometimes to a *vertigo* or giddiness—that he had been just now seized with it—and that, in short, it had deprived him of all recollection—and that he did not remember what he was saying. Dr. Robertson immediately rose, and said that he was sure the venerable Assembly would most willingly pause for some time, until his much esteemed friend and colleague recovered his recollection—that, for his own part, he had never heard his reverend brother express himself with greater clearness and precision of language, nor with greater eloquence. The Principal then analyzed that part of Dr. Erskine's speech which had been delivered—recapitulated his arguments, and entreated him to proceed. These gentle means produced the desired effect. Dr. Erskine rose, delivered his sentiments at great length, and concluded his speech, much to the satisfaction of all his friends and admirers. But, no sooner was he done than Dr. Robertson rose to reply, overturned the arguments which Dr. Erskine had advanced, brought forward a motion in direct opposition, and carried it by the votes of the Assembly.—This anecdote, which I had from a gentleman of the most unquestionable veracity, and

who was present, affords a most convincing proof of Dr. Robertson's great talents as the leader of a popular Assembly, and is also an instance, were any necessary, of the conciliating manner in which he treated those who opposed his church politics in the Assembly.

Dr. Erskine died upon the 18th January, 1803.

Dr. Robertson, as has been already mentioned, was elected Principal of the University of Edinburgh upon the 10th of March, and received his commission upon the 10th of November 1762. In this situation he made a most distinguished figure, and it is no reproach to any of his predecessors to say, that no one ever filled that important office with greater ability and dignity. He was respected and beloved by his colleagues. The same conciliating manner and good sense which distinguished him in every other situation, was most apparent in his conduct as head of the University. His great reputation as an historian could not alone have accomplished that mutual harmony and co-operation which pervaded the University during the whole time of his presidency. It is a most singular fact that the *Senatus Academicus* never came to a vote upon any subject whatever. And it is universally admitted that this was chiefly effected by his means.

Dr. Robertson was quite in his element as Principal of the University. He seems to have been enthusiastically attached to a literary life, and to have annexed a very high value to the principality. Because, when he was urged by his friends, and even encouraged by Majesty, to repair to England in order to undertake a history of England,—when the freest access to the public records was to be afforded, and a liberal



provision made for him,—he appears to have been willing to relinquish all his other preferments, excepting that of being Principal. He had also formed the determined resolution of retaining his character as a clergyman of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

The interest which he took in whatever regarded the prosperity of the University was most exemplary. Every effort which he could exert was employed to promote the cause of literature and science. The first great reform which he attempted and accomplished was with respect to the library. Before his time books had never been given or lent out to the students. Being persuaded that access to a good library was of the most essential importance to promote the progress of the students in their different literary and scientific pursuits, he made use of all his influence with the Patrons to enlarge the buildings in which the books were kept. This he at last accomplished. The catalogue was in a very confused and imperfect state. A person was therefore employed to compile a new one. No regular contribution had been exacted from those who entered college in order to purchase such books as the progress of literature and science rendered necessary. He therefore proposed that a small sum should be levied from each student and appropriated to this express purpose. This was then limited to half-a-crown. When these arrangements were effected, the library was open for three days during the winter, and two days during the summer session; and upon depositing the value of the book which was wanted, it was lent out for a fortnight.

Dr. Robertson's attention was next directed towards

the formation of a museum in the University, as the following minute of the Town Council shows:—

*Edinburgh, 19th June 1765.*

“Anent the petition given in by the Rev. Dr. William Robertson, Principal of the College of Edinburgh, setting forth, That as the flourishing state of the University adds considerably both to the reputation and wealth of the city, the petitioner, with the greater confidence, ventures to lay before his honourable patrons a proposal which will be of great benefit to the University, and hoped from their known and uniform attention to its interests, that he should receive a favourable answer.

“That a museum or repository of natural curiosities, particularly those of our own country, has long been wanted in the University of Edinburgh. The acquisition of one, besides other advantages too many to be enumerated, would tend greatly to complete the plan of medical education, on account of which so many strangers resort thither to the no small emolument both of the Professors and citizens. But as there was reason to apprehend that the procuring of a museum might be attended with an expense which would exceed what the honourable Patrons could with propriety bestow, no step has been taken hitherto in that affair. That an opportunity now offered of executing the plan at little expense. By the removal of the printers who had a lease of the old library, that room is now vacant, and might be fitted up to be a very commodious and decent museum. The petitioner laid the said proposal before the college bailie and treasurer, and made it his business likewise to communicate and explain it to all the



magistrates and several other members of the town council, &c.”\*

The Patrons allowed one hundred and fifty pounds for this purpose. What progress was made in regard to the museum at this time I have not been informed. The Professorship of Natural History was not founded till the 1st March 1770, when the late Dr. Ramsay was appointed the first Professor of that science by the crown. He died 15th December 1778.

The attention and zeal which he showed during the whole course of his Principality, not only to increase the number of the sciences taught, but that the different chairs in the University should be filled with men of abilities in their profession, was very remarkable. His influence not only with the Patrons but with government was great, and no impartial person ever asserted that on any occasion he had made an improper use of it. In short, whatever regarded the prosperity of the University, the welfare of the students, or their accommodation in the college, called forth his exertions. As long as his health permitted, he visited the literary classes annually, and neglected no part of his academical duty.

It is well known how much the country was divided with respect to the propriety of the American war. Mr. Stewart expresses himself with some hesitation as to his real sentiments; but Dr. Erskine is very explicit that they were in favour of government. He seems indeed to have conducted himself with great moderation during the whole of that unfortunate contest.

In the year 1778, relief had been granted to the English Roman Catholics from some of the pe-

\* Counc. Records, vol. lxxxi. p. 76.

nalties which had been enacted against them at the Revolution. Those of that persuasion in Scotland naturally looked forward to the extension of the same toleration to Scotland. The ferment which was thereby produced among all ranks was very great. So irritated were the minds of the populace in the capital, that upon the 2d of February 1779, the mob proceeded to acts of great violence. They burned the Roman Catholic Chapel, and the house of the bishop,—they burned part of his excellent library, and robbed him of what remained, and would have done much greater mischief had they not been prevented by a military force. From Dr. Robertson's public station and character, his sentiments in regard to the Popish bill were generally known. The lawless banditti therefore had marked out his house in the college as one of the first they had determined to burn. Fortunately, however, notice of their intentions had been timeously communicated to the magistrates of the city, and they procured a detachment from the castle to guard it, and thus the design was prevented from being carried into execution. As a farther proof of the affection that subsisted between the colleagues, it may be mentioned that the moment Dr. Erskine, whose opinions were known to be directly opposed to any relaxation in favour of Popery, heard of the threatened attempt on the Principal's house, he ran thither to exert his influence with the mob to avert it.

The relief proposed in this bill naturally came under the review of the General Assembly, which met in the subsequent May. Dr. Robertson appeared in his place, and in the most eloquent manner advocated the cause of toleration, and explained his senti-

ments, and the reasons of his conduct at very great length, and informed that venerable court, that when he saw the violent flame which it had kindled in Scotland, he had taken the liberty of laying before his Majesty's servants in London the state of the feelings of the people of Scotland, and recommended that the bill should not be passed on account of the unseasonableness of the time. The more wealthy and respectable of the Scottish Roman Catholics entertaining the same sentiments, the bill was withdrawn.

The last time that Dr. Robertson was a member of the General Assembly was in the year 1780.—Though his health was then apparently as vigorous as ever, yet he determined to retire and no longer to take any active part in the debates of that venerable court, of which, for a long series of years, he had universally been considered as the leader. Many theories have been formed in order to account for this conduct, which, to his friends and admirers, appeared to be so strange—from which it may be fairly inferred, that he had confided his real motives to no one. The most generally received opinion is, that he saw, or thought he saw, that possibly some young men who, imitating the example he had first given, might tear the laurel from his brow, and that, therefore, it was most prudent for him to retire, while his influence in the church was undiminished, or rather was at its zenith. Sir Henry Moncreiff has suggested another cause, “that the more violent men of his party had teased him much to have recourse to more vigorous measures, and in particular were desirous

that subscription to the Confession of Faith should be abolished." I have not the least doubt that all of these motives had their due weight with Dr. Robertson. But I have long been of opinion that one chief cause, if not the principal cause, of his retiring, was feeling the approaches of old age. It cannot be denied that he was then only in the sixtieth year of his age, and his constitution apparently vigorous, but then it ought to be mentioned that he was very early seized with fits of deafness, which disqualified him in a great degree from taking that active part in the debates of the Assembly which he was accustomed to take. He himself probably felt this more sensibly than his friends were aware of. So rapidly did this infirmity increase upon him, that in the course of two or three years after withdrawing from the Assembly, he seldom or never attended church, excepting when he officiated himself. The reason was not only well known to his liberal and pious colleague—and to the whole of the congregation who regularly attended at the Old Greyfriars, but it was universally known throughout the city, that he could not hear one word delivered from the pulpit by any preacher. From the same cause also, for two or three years, he did not visit the literary classes in the college as he had been accustomed to do. The last time I recollect of his performing this part of his duty was during the session of 1787-88.\* I never can forget the

\* In a letter formerly quoted, and addressed to Mr. Gibbon, 27th February, 1788, he says, "My health, until lately, has been more shattered, and as I advance in life (I am now sixty-six,) though my faculties, I imagine, are still entire, yet I feel my mind less active and ardent."—*Gibbon's Mis. Works*, vol. ii.

pleasing and generous smile which was upon his countenance during the whole time that the examination lasted—and the affectionate and interesting manner in which, at the conclusion, he addressed his youthful audience. The manner in which he discharged the duties of his office as Principal was exceedingly impressive.

Though he had retired from the business of the Assembly, his efforts to promote the cause of literature and of science were not in the least abated. "The Philosophical Society of Edinburgh," had existed for a good many years, and three volumes of their transactions had been published. "In 1782," however, we are informed by the late Lord Woodhouselee, "a scheme was proposed by Dr. Robertson, Principal of the University, for the establishment of a Society upon a more extended plan, which, upon the model of some of the foreign academies, should have for its object the cultivation of every branch of science, erudition, and taste. This plan was carried into effect; and the *Royal Society of Edinburgh*, which comprehended all the members of the Philosophical Society, and many others eminent in science and in literature, was incorporated by charter from the King in 1783.\* He may, therefore, be considered as the founder of this most excellent Institution.

Dr. Robertson's intimacy and correspondence with Mr. Hume and Mr. Gibbon have been much enlarged on by persons who were actuated by very different motives. That these two gentlemen entertained

\* Life of Lord Kames, vol. i. p. 185.

opposite sentiments respecting the truth of Revelation, from those held by Dr. Robertson, cannot admit of a doubt. In a letter to Mr. Gibbon, he observes, "in the intercourse between Mr. Hume and me we always found something to blame and something to commend." It does not appear that in conversation they had ever attempted to discuss the religious questions about which they differed—and if they had done so, of what benefit could it have been to either. The passions of both would most likely have been irritated, and they could not have been of that service to each other in their several studies as they eventually were. The idea which Dr. Robertson annexed to Mr. Hume's friendship is strongly expressed in a letter to Mr. Gibbon.—"I am much pleased," says he, "with your mentioning my friendship with Mr. Hume. I have always considered that as one of the most fortunate and honourable circumstances of my life. It is a felicity of the age and country in which we live, that men of letters can enter the same walk of science, and go on successfully without feeling one sentiment of envy or rivalry.\*"

Dr. Robertson has nowhere given any opinion in direct terms respecting the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters of Gibbon's History, and perhaps he was not called upon to do so. In a letter, however, addressed to Mr. Strahan previous to his being personally acquainted with Mr. Gibbon, and before he had read the work, he says—"I have not read the

\* Gibbon's *Mis. Works*, vol. ii. p. 204.

two last chapters, but am sorry, from what I have heard of them, that he has taken such a tone in them as will give great offence, and hurt the sale of the book." There is no document whatever in existence, or at least which has been given to the world, from which it can be inferred, that he was indifferent to the cause of Christianity. The testimony of his pious colleague, Dr. Erskine, will, in the estimation of all competent judges, be esteemed to be of more value than that of a host of enemies, who were strangers to the Principal's temper and sentiments—and many of them even to works that he had written.

Dr. Robertson's health began evidently to decline towards the end of the year 1791. Strong symptoms of jaundice made their appearance, which at last terminated in a fatal illness. He was advised to remove to an airy situation in the vicinity of Edinburgh, called Grange House, but the change of air produced little or no good effect. He died upon the 11th of June, 1793, in the 72d year of his age. A most striking likeness of him is preserved in the library of the University. Perhaps the history of Scotland does not furnish an instance of a man who possessed so very varied and singular endowments.

The following inscription, written by the late Dr. James Gregory, is placed on the Monument erected on the ground in the cemetery of the Greyfriars' where the remains of Dr. Robertson are deposited :

In hoc conduntur Sepulchro,  
 reliquæ summi Viri  
 ingenio, judicio, doctrina præstantis,  
 suavissima indole, puris moribus,  
 assidua benignitate, omnibusque privatis virtutibus;  
 suis quam maxime cari;  
 Sacrosancti Evangelii  
 Ministri fidelis, prædicatoris eloquentis;  
 in Ecclesia Scotiæ administranda,  
 Presbyteri mitis, prudentis, felicitis;  
 Academia Edinburgæ Præfecti meritissimi;  
 HISTORICI  
 gravis, discreti, candidi, sagacis.  
 Cujus memoriam,  
 non exigua hæc et ruitura monumenta,  
 sed scripta ipsius ære perenniora,  
 vetabunt mori,  
 atque in omne ævum testabuntur,  
 tale sui sæculi, et patriæ,  
 artibus ingenuis, et scientia frugifera,  
 literisque elegantibus,  
 jam tum florentissimæ,  
 decus et lumen  
 extitisse

GULIELMUM ROBERTSON, S. S. T. P.

Natus est A. D. MDCXXI. Obiit. A. D. MDCXCIII.



## CHAPTER III.

*Mr. James Russell, Professor of Natural Philosophy.—Dr. John Gregory, Practice and Theory of Physic.—Dr. Joseph Black, Chemistry.—Dr. Francis Home, Materia Medica.—Mr. Andrew Dalziel, Greek.—Mr. John Bruce, Logic.*

## MR. JAMES RUSSELL.

UPON Dr. Ferguson's removal to the chair of Moral Philosophy, he was succeeded as Professor of Natural Philosophy by Mr. James Russell, who then practised surgery in Edinburgh. This took place upon the 23d of May 1764. Of his history I have been able to collect only a small portion. The honourable testimony which Professor Dugald Stewart bears to his abilities as a lecturer cannot fail of exciting a regret that we know so little of a man who, according to his account, discharged the duties of his office with so singular address. The following passage is taken from the life of Dr. Thomas Reid—"I recollect, too," says Mr. Stewart, "when I attended (about the year 1771) the lectures of the late Mr. Russell, to have heard high encomiums on the philosophy of Reid, in the course of those comprehensive discussions concerning the objects and the rules of experimental science, with which he so agreeably diversified the particular doctrines of physics."\* Such a testimony will have no small weight with those who are acquainted with the talents of the

\* Stewart's Biographical Mem. p. 424, 4to.

writer. Mr. Russell only taught for eight sessions, having died upon the 17th of October, 1773. His son, of the same name, is at present Professor of Clinical Surgery.

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DR. JOHN GREGORY.

Dr. John Rutherford, formerly mentioned, had long taught the practice of medicine with reputation. Being considerably advanced in years, and desirous to be relieved from the fatigue of lecturing, he gave in his resignation to the patrons upon the 12th of February, 1766,—and on the same day Dr. John Gregory was elected his successor.

Dr. Gregory was one of the most eminent and popular physicians that the last century has produced. Amiable in private life, respectful and decorous in his public duty, he engrossed the affections of all. Perhaps there never was a public man held in so great estimation as a private practitioner.

John Gregory was born at Aberdeen in the month of May, 1725. Descended from a line of philosophers, to which, as far as I know, no parallel in the history of mankind can be found, he was not unworthy of the greatest of his ancestors. He received every indulgence from his father in the way of having an opportunity of cultivating his talents which the town of Aberdeen could afford. Being early destined for the medical profession, the elementary part of his education was conducted in such a manner as to lay a most solid foundation for a thorough acquaintance with the learned languages.—After having gone through his college course at King's College, Aberdeen, and taken the degree of

Master of Arts, he repaired to Edinburgh, in order to profit by the prelections of those celebrated professors, who were the founders of the Edinburgh Medical School. Here his indefatigable application to study, his genteel address, and the suavity of his manners, gained him many friends.

Boerhaave had been dead for some years, but he had succeeded in raising the University of Leyden to an unexampled state of prosperity. His chair was ably filled by the celebrated Gaubius, and such was the reputation of that school of medicine, that none were in those days supposed to have received a complete medical education, unless they had studied for some time at Leyden. Our young philosopher was sent thither, but how long he remained I know not. He was there in the year 1746. He afterwards went to Paris, which was equally famed as a school for surgery.

He appears to have commenced the practice of medicine and surgery in Aberdeen; for in country towns it was then universally the custom, which, indeed, in many places still continues, for these two professions to be united. Zealous for the promotion of medical science, in conjunction with Dr. David Skene, he began, upon the 3d of November, 1750, a course of medical lectures at Aberdeen. Dr. Skene undertook to teach anatomy and surgery, and botany, in which he was an eminent proficient, and at the same time began a course of midwifery. Dr. Gregory was to teach the theory and practice of physic. From want of due encouragement they were obliged to relinquish the design.

Dr. Gregory, upon the death of his brother James,

(20th November, 1755,) was elected Professor of Medicine in King's College, but, I believe, never delivered any lectures, the practice of doing so having been discontinued long before his time. He repaired to Edinburgh early in 1765, and speedily came into extensive practice. The resignation of Dr. Rutherford in his favour has been above noticed, which was probably a very unexpected event to Dr. Cullen, who was at this time Professor of Chemistry. In consequence of the death of Dr. Alston, during the session of 1760–1761, Dr. Cullen, upon very short notice, and indeed at the request of the students, with the concurrence of the patrons, delivered a course of lectures on the *Materia Medica*. This raised his popularity very high, and may be considered as the basis upon which it was originally founded in Edinburgh. Chemistry was but little studied, and he possessed neither the requisite time, nor opportunities of showing what his genius was capable of. When he was preferred to teach the institutions of medicine, upon the death of Dr. Whytt, he evidently appears to have been disappointed that he had not obtained the practical chair, for in the course of three years we find the following minute in the Records of the Patrons:—\*

*Edinburgh, 12th April, 1769.*

“Anent the petition given in by Dr. William Cullen, Professor of Medicine in the University of Edinburgh, setting forth that the present establishment of the teaching of physic in the University of Edinburgh, was attended with several inconveniencies, in so far as the theory and practice of that art were

\* Counc. Regist. ap. an.

taught by different professors : That several advantages may arise from the same persons being employed to teach both the branches, that is a complete system of the whole, and more especially will this be of use, if, at the same time, the students may have an opportunity of hearing complete systems from two different professors : For these reasons the petitioner, with consent of Dr. John Gregory, and with the approbation of the other members of the Faculty of Physic, humbly prayed the patrons of the University that they would be pleased to appoint the petitioner with Dr. Gregory to be Joint-Professors of Medicine, with power to each of them to teach both the theory and practice of that art ; humbly proposing, at the same time, that the appointment should be with the following conditions :—First, that with respect to the students, the ordinary course of study may not be interrupted or altered, though each of the professors are to deliver courses of both the theory and practice, that both courses shall not be taught by any one of them during the same session, but that alternately they shall teach the one year the *Theory*, and the other the *Practice*, and that each year the two professors shall teach different branches. Secondly, that the establishment now proposed should subsist during the lives or incumbencies of Dr. Gregory and Dr. Cullen, but that upon the death of either of them, or their otherwise quitting their profession, that the surviving or remaining professor should have it in his option either to continue the arrangement now proposed or to betake himself to the teaching of the practice alone, and to have the sole privilege of teaching the same—as the petition bears : Which being

read, the same was remitted to the Lord Provost's Committee, and they to report. Accordingly Bailie Guthrie, as preses of the said committee, this day reported that they, having considered the said petition, were of opinion, That the council might grant the desire of the first part of the petition, and appoint the petitioner and Dr. Gregory to deliver courses both of the theory and practice of medicine, so that both courses should not be taught by any one of them, during the same session, but alternately one year the theory and the other year the practice, and that each year the two professors teach different branches. But the Committee were of opinion, that, upon the death of either of them, or their otherwise quitting their profession, the Town Council should have full right to fill up the vacancy, as if the said appointment had never been made as the report bears—Which being considered by the Magistrates and Council, they, with the Extraordinary Deacons, approved of the said report, and enact, grant, and appoint accordingly ; but reserving always to the Magistrates and Town Council the full right and privilege of filling up the vacancy in case of the death of either of the said Dr. Cullen or Dr. Gregory, or their quitting their respective professions, and that in terms of and agreeable to the said report."

The origin of the whole of this transaction is involved in obscurity—Dr. Gregory's conduct throughout the business was in every respect becoming the character which he had to support. The students were divided in their opinions respecting the abilities of these eminent men as public lecturers, and as usual entered very keenly into the medical theories they

severally taught. In order, therefore, not to injure the prosperity of the University, all parties agreed to the arrangement mentioned in the above extract. It is impossible to affirm with certainty what effects it produced. The experiment was of too short duration to found any theory upon it. As a proof how eagerly Dr. Cullen had set his mind upon the profession of the *Practice*, not only the expressions employed in the paper above quoted, but the speedy and active means which he adopted as soon as the death of Dr. Gregory was known, furnish the most abundant evidence were it necessary.

Dr. Gregory's works were not numerous, but were each of them excellent in its kind. His "Comparative View of the Faculties of Man with those of the Animal World," was his first publication, and contains a great deal of ingenious reasoning and sound observation. That "On the Duties, &c. of a Physician," being published surreptitiously, was afterwards improved, and acknowledged by the author. He had also begun and actually published, "Elements of the Practice of Physic," designed as a text book to his Lectures. But he stopped at those diseases which are called *Febrile*.

The world, however, was soon to be deprived of the labours of this eminent philosopher and most excellent man. For he was found dead in bed upon the morning of the 10th of February, 1773, having apparently expired without a groan. He was then in the forty-eighth year of his age, and seventh of his professorship in the University of Edinburgh. Perhaps no person was ever more universally regretted. His great professional talents, joined to the most

amiable temper and engaging manners, constituted him one of the most popular public characters of the last century. It is he, to whose sudden death Dr. Beattie alludes, in the conclusion of the well known poem of the MINSTREL, and whom he so feelingly apostrophizes in the last stanza of it :

Art thou, my GREGORY, for ever fled !  
 And am I left to unavailing woe !  
 When fortune's storms assail this weary head,  
 Where cares long since have shed untimely snow !  
 Ah, now for comfort whither shall I go !  
 No more thy soothing voice my anguish cheers :  
 Thy placid eyes with smiles no longer glow,  
 My hopes to cherish, and allay my fears.  
 'Tis meet that I should mourn : flow forth afresh my tears.

After his decease, his son published a small work, entitled, " A Father's Legacy to his Daughters," which is justly held in the highest estimation. He was succeeded in his chair by Dr. Cullen.

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#### DR. JOSEPH BLACK.

Upon the 30th of April 1766, Dr. Cullen transmitted to the Patrons of the University his resignation of the professorship of Chemistry, and upon the same day they elected Dr. Joseph Black as his successor.

The father of this eminent philosopher was a native of Ireland, whose ancestors had originally come from Scotland. Being engaged in the mercantile profession, he had repaired to France, and fixed his residence at Bourdeaux, upon the banks of the Garonne, and entered into the wine trade. He must have been a man of considerable abilities and general information, for he attracted the notice and acquired the friendship of that excellent judge of character, the



President Montesquieu, the celebrated author of *L'Esprit des Loix*.

Dr. Black was born at Bourdeaux in the year 1728. When twelve years of age he was sent to Belfast, where he received the best elementary education which that town then afforded. After going through with applause the usual course at school, it was resolved to send him to the University. His father's circumstances rendering it perfectly convenient to gratify the young man's desire for knowledge, he repaired to Glasgow in 1746 when in the eighteenth year of his age.

Glasgow at that time contained eminent professors in almost every department of literature and science. But Mr. Black's attention seems to have been very early arrested, and his taste formed, for physical knowledge. He soon became the favourite pupil of Mr. Robert Dick, the professor of Natural Philosophy, which gradually produced the most unreserved intimacy, notwithstanding the disproportion of their age. I am uncertain whether he boarded in the house of the professor; if he did not, such was the familiar footing on which he was treated, that he was always a welcome guest at his table. Mr. Dick's generous patronage of the young man was strongly augmented in consequence of Mr. Black being the intimate companion of his son. They had given a decided preference to physical knowledge, and a similarity of pursuits cemented a friendship which during life never suffered the smallest interruption.

Dr. Cullen had just entered on his splendid career at the commencement of that session in which Mr. Black went to college. The first medical prefer-

ment which was ever conferred upon Dr. Cullen was that of being appointed lecturer on Chemistry in the University of Glasgow, and such was his popularity that he almost immediately drew the attention, not of the students only, to his lectures, but his fame was very generally spread through the city of Glasgow, by which means many attended the chemistry class who had no professional object in view.

It is uncertain during the course of what year he first attended Dr. Cullen's class, though it appears to have been soon after he went to college. Mr. Dick's lectures on Natural Philosophy had opened to him a most interesting and boundless field of inquiry. The doctrines of physics therefore first occupied his attention, and were the objects of his diligent study. He had been early destined for one of the learned professions, but neither theology nor law had presented such charms as medicine, and the sciences connected with it. His determination, therefore, was soon taken. Dr. Black's biographer, the late Dr. John Robison, his friend, his successor in the Chemical chair at Glasgow, and the editor of his lectures, thus describes the ardour and constancy with which he prosecuted his studies at this time.

"Our young philosopher," says Dr. Robison, "had laid a very comprehensive and serious plan for the conduct of his studies. This appears by a number of note books found among his papers. There are some in which he seems to have inserted every thing as it took his fancy, in medicine, chemistry, jurisprudence, or matters of taste; and I find others into which he has transferred the same things, but has distributed them according to their scientific

connections. In short, he has kept a journal and ledger of his studies, and has posted his books like a merchant. I have looked over these memorandums with some care, and have there seen the first germs of those discoveries which have at last produced such a complete revolution in chemical science. What particularly struck me, was the steadiness with which he advanced in any path of knowledge,—*nulla re-  
trorsum*. Things are inserted for the first time, from present impression of their singularity or importance, but without any allusions to their connections. When a thing of the same kind is mentioned again, there is generally a reference back to its fellow; and thus the most insulated facts often acquired a connection which gave them scientific importance.”\*

A perseverance and an ardour similar to what Mr. Black displayed in the pursuit of knowledge is seldom to be met with, and could not fail of being honourably rewarded. Dr. Cullen had early remarked the superiority of his talents, and his unaffected modesty, for it was Cullen’s unvaried practice to cultivate an acquaintance with his students to enter keenly into an inquiry what progress they had made in their studies, to ascertain if possible to what department of medical science they had chiefly directed their attention, and what appeared to be the peculiar bent of their genius.

Mr. Black was fitted in a most remarkable degree to please the Doctor, and to assist him materially in the discharge of his public duty as professor of Chemistry. At an early stage of their acquaintance,

\* Preface to Dr. Black’s Lectures.

therefore, he had received many testimonies of Cullen's approbation; and, in particular, the strongest encouragement to prosecute his chemical inquiries. In a short time he became assistant to the Doctor, and contributed in no inconsiderable degree to the reputation which his lectures acquired, both for the general knowledge they contained, and the neatness with which the different experiments were performed illustrative of the chemical doctrines delivered. It was in this school that Dr. Black laid the foundation of those discoveries which have immortalized his name.

Having attended all the classes in the university of Glasgow, in which medicine was taught, he now determined to repair to Edinburgh. This university, to whose reputation as a medical school, he himself afterwards so essentially contributed, had already risen into considerable notice, and students from various countries, particularly from England, Ireland, America, and the West Indies, had spread the fame of its professors, and the many opportunities of improvement which it afforded. He was enrolled as a student in 1751, regularly attended the requisite medical classes, previously to being graduated as a doctor of medicine, and was admitted to that honour in 1754. The subject of the thesis was *De humore acido a cibis orto, et magnesia alba*; and in it was laid the foundation of his celebrated discoveries respecting *fixed air, or carbonic acid gas*.

The account which Dr. Black himself has given of his attention being first directed to the nature of magnesia, is in the following words:—"I was indeed led to this examination of the absorbent earths, partly

being advanced to a chair in the University of Glasgow, I am not informed. But upon Dr. Cullen's removal to Edinburgh in 1756, a vacancy took place in the college. And he, as his successor, gave lectures on chemistry. Shortly after, he was preferred to the anatomical chair; but in consequence of his having formed the idea, that he was not completely qualified for the discharge of the duties of that office, he prevailed with the professor of the Institutes of Medicine to exchange classes with him. He appears to have taught the Institutes, as well as the chemistry, until he went to Edinburgh. What plan he followed in his course on the Institutes, is not known. He never encouraged any conversation upon the subject. The bent of his genius was to chemistry.

Dr. Robison has proved, in the most satisfactory manner, that Dr. Black had brought to maturity his speculations respecting *latent heat*, some time between 1759 and 1763. Upon the 23d of April 1762, he read to a literary society the result of his experiments, and an account of the whole investigation. This society consisted of the members of the university, and several other literary gentlemen of Glasgow. The attempts made by De Luc of Geneva, to tear the laurel from Dr. Black's brow, have been fully exposed. And the undoubted fact now stated, (for the record, I understand, is still in existence,) affords a sufficient refutation of De Luc's pretensions, Dr. Black derived the most active co-operation and valuable assistance in conducting his inquiries, from the celebrated Mr. Watt, afterwards of Birmingham,

and the improver of the steam-engine, but at that time one of his pupils.

These experiments, and the theory founded upon them, when taken in connection with his discoveries respecting the properties of fixed air, have raised his reputation as a philosopher very high, and entitled him to be viewed as the *Founder* of the *Pneumatic Chemistry*, an honour which is justly conceded to him by the celebrated French chemist Lavoisier.

Dr. Black's practice at Glasgow was considerable, and it was in his power to have extended it greatly, had he been so inclined, or the state of his health permitted. The amenity of his manner, combined with his high reputation both as a professor and a private practitioner, rendered him an universal favourite.

We have already mentioned that Dr. Black succeeded Dr. Cullen in the chemical chair at Edinburgh as he had formerly done at Glasgow. Dr. Cullen's talents, zeal for the cultivation of science, and indefatigable application to the business of his class, had rendered the study of chemistry extremely popular in Edinburgh. The number that attended his class was much greater than formerly, which ought not, however, to be ascribed solely to his abilities as a teacher; because it was owing to the interest which partly the progress of chemistry, and partly that of the arts and sciences, naturally produced. These had a tendency to react upon each other.

Under Dr. Black the chemical class greatly increased from similar causes. Besides his manner,

which was peculiarly engaging, the neatness with which he performed the various experiments was perhaps never exceeded; and this in a course of chemistry is of the most essential importance, both for illustrating the doctrines that are taught, and interesting the hearers in prosecuting the study of the science.

The state of Dr. Black's health was at all times exceedingly delicate. The slightest exertion, whether bodily or mental, if continued for any length of time, always brought on a spitting of blood. This prevented him from prosecuting that career of discovery which his early success had promised. It was also the cause of his never giving to the world an account of his Theory of Latent Heat. This, indeed, he often attempted, but he was under the necessity of as often relinquishing the task. He felt the approaches of old age at a comparatively early period of life. For when only a little above sixty he was under the necessity of employing an assistant. This was the late Dr. John Rotheram, afterwards Professor of Natural Philosophy in the University of St. Andrews. This gentleman generally delivered about a third of the course. At last Dr. B. finding that he was incapable of the requisite exertion, determined to retire altogether. This he did upon the 21st of October 1795, when the present excellent professor of chemistry, Dr. Thomas Charles Hope, and he were appointed conjunct professors.

This distinguished philosopher and amiable man did not long survive the period when this arrangement was made, for he died upon the 26th of November 1799, in the 71st year of his age.

## DR. FRANCIS HOME.

The medical school of the University of Edinburgh was now rising rapidly into notice, or rather had already attracted the attention of the most distinguished medical practitioners throughout Europe. The well-earned fame of the first Monro was universally acknowledged, and the various treatises which he published were then, and are still, esteemed as standard works. The reputation of Dr. Robert Whytt, of whom some account has been already given, was firmly established on the continent, chiefly in consequence of his controversy with Haller concerning Sensibility and Irritability. The prelections of Cullen, Gregory, Black, and Hope, powerfully contributed to produce the same effect of spreading its fame as a school of medicine, while the patrons, entering warmly into the public feeling, were determined to seize every opportunity within the sphere of their influence, of employing the most effectual means to promote its prosperity.

For this purpose it was resolved that the *Materia Medica* and Botany should not be assigned to one professor only, as had hitherto been the case, but that they should be disjoined, and a distinct professorship of the *Materia Medica* be founded, the teacher of which should be a member of the medical faculty. Dr. Hope therefore, with the concurrence of the patrons, resigned the duties of prelecting on *Materia Medica* into the hands of his constituents, upon the first of June 1768, and upon the same day the late Dr. Francis Home was appointed to teach that branch of science,



Dr. Home was born on the 9th of November 1719. He was the third son of James Home, Esq. of Eccles, in the county of Berwick, Advocate, and of ——— Kinloch, daughter of Sir Francis Kinloch of Gilmer-ton, Bart. His father was esteemed a man of abilities, and was the author of several works in the line of his profession. He lost his mother at a very early period of life.

Sensible of the great advantages which accompany a liberal education, Mr. Home resolved that his son should possess every opportunity of improvement in this respect. Not contented with the instruction he could obtain at the parish school, young Home was placed under the care of the celebrated Mr. Cruickshank, (uncle of the teacher of the same name, for many years one of the most eminent masters of the High School of Edinburgh,) who, for upwards of half a century, was universally allowed to be one of the most celebrated schoolmasters that Scotland ever produced. Though not necessarily connected with the subject of this memoir, it may be observed, that it was this teacher who communicated so perfect a knowledge of the Latin language to Dr. John Brown, the well known author of the Brunonian system, and who patronized him in early life. Mr. C. commenced his career as master of the grammar school at Haddington, and it was during his residence at this place that Mr. Home was put under his charge. He afterwards removed to the town of Dunse, and thither our young student followed him, if we may so express ourselves, for by removing to Dunse Mr. C. had fixed his abode at no great distance from the place of Mr. Home's birth. Under this able teacher he acquired a thorough

knowledge of the elements of the Latin language, as well as a taste for classical literature which never forsook him, but continued unabated in extreme old age; and when he had relinquished all his public professional duties, it afforded him a fund of rational and elegant pleasure, in which he delighted to the last period of his existence.

Mr. Home had been originally destined for the Scottish church, and his education had been conducted with that view. The interest of his family connections afforded the most favourable prospect of being speedily presented to a living; but his inclination not leading him to the study of divinity, he was generously and properly permitted to follow the bent of his own genius. At what period, or how early he had formed an attachment to medicine as a profession is not known, but abandoning theology, he was bound apprentice to Mr. Rattray, then a very eminent surgeon in Edinburgh. This judicious plan of putting him under the care and direction of a person of skill, and in extensive practice, gave him excellent opportunities of improvement, and was an admirable preparative for the studies which he had the prospect of commencing at the University.

When his apprenticeship was finished, he enrolled himself a member of the University of Edinburgh, and studied under the then eminent professors, Monro, Alston, Sinclair, and Rutherford. His industry and ardour in the prosecution of medical science attracted the notice of his instructors; they encouraged him in the laudable ambition to excel in the line of his profession, and he received from them very distinguished marks of their approbation. His ex-

emplary behaviour, his indefatigable application to study, and the proficiency which he even then had attained, drew the attention of his fellow students, and as the old adage, *pares cum paribus facillime congregantur*, is of universal application, it of course held true in his case. His associates were among the most distinguished class of students, many of whom afterwards rose to eminence. It may be mentioned that the celebrated Dr. Mark Akenside, author of "The Pleasures of Imagination," was his intimate friend. The students then, as well as now, freely canvassed the medical theories taught by the professors, and the mode of practice which they recommended. Though they came to the University no doubt to be taught the principles and practice of medicine, yet they entertained no idea of resigning their understandings to the unqualified direction of their masters, nor did they imagine that they were guilty of any indiscretion, or want of due submission to the authority of those whom they respected, if they did not acquiesce in all their conclusions. It was this independent tone of thinking among the students, and which was liberally cherished by the professors themselves, that gave rise to the Medical Societies of Edinburgh. Among these the Royal Medical Society deserves particular notice, both as being the oldest, and from the very respectable character which it has long, and still retains. Mr. Home was among the first founders of this institution, which took place in 1737.

Having completed his medical studies at the University, he was appointed in 1742 surgeon to Sir John Cope's regiment of dragoons, which was then

on foreign service in Flanders. He joined it along with the late Sir William Erskine of Torry, whose father was lieutenant-colonel of that regiment. He served abroad during the whole of that war until the peace of 1748. He and his companions therefore were not exposed to the reproach which was justly cast upon their commanding officer for his cowardly conduct at the battle of Prestonpans. When the regiment arrived in England, however, so incensed was the nation at Cope, that they were treated with some degree of rudeness by the inhabitants until they were undeceived by the information of their being abroad during the whole time of the rebellion in Scotland.

Mr. Home's faithful discharge of his duty, and his professional ardour, frequently drew the attention of his superior officers. In particular, Sir John Pringle, who was at the head of the medical department, being physician-general to his Majesty's forces, and the royal hospitals in the Low Countries, often expressed publicly his high approbation of his conduct, and as he knew him at college, and was well acquainted with his relations, he bore a similar testimony to his singular merit in private letters to the king. In short, a friendship and intimacy was formed between them, which the death of Sir John alone solved.

Mr. Home did not confine his attention to mere detail of his duty as a regimental surgeon. His views were more liberal and enlarged. He studied his profession as a science. Amidst the bustle of war he read much, and neglected no opportunity of improving his stock of knowledge. When the ar-

went into winter quarters therefore, he took frequent opportunities of visiting the University of Leyden, then still enjoying a portion of that reputation to which it had been raised by the illustrious Boerhaave. By thus combining the study of medicine as a science, with its practice as an art, he acquired, during those seven years which were spent by so many others in idleness and dissipation, a great fund of medical knowledge, a portion of which he afterwards communicated to the world.

At the end of the war he quitted the army, and graduated at Edinburgh in the year 1750. On that occasion he published a Thesis, *De Febre Remittente*, that is still quoted, as containing an excellent account of that disease, which so much prevailed among the British troops in Flanders; he has also introduced many useful observations on the remittent fevers of marshy countries. He settled the same year as a physician in Edinburgh, and in May 1751 was admitted a licentiate by the Royal College of Physicians there; in the subsequent year, (4th Aug. 1752,) he was raised to the dignity of a fellow.

The life of a medical practitioner giving an account of his exertions to become eminent in his profession, can seldom afford much matter for the biographer. It will be sufficient to mention here, that Dr. Home did not pass the early part of it solely in the usual routine of medical practice; he applied with zeal to the cultivation of the science of medicine, of which the works published by him from time to time furnish ample evidence.

It has been already mentioned, that the professorship of Botany was separated from that of Materia

Medica in the year 1768, and that Dr. Home was appointed the first professor of the latter science after that arrangement was adopted. From that time, he applied himself with great diligence to what was now his more peculiar province, and for thirty years contributed his share towards supporting the reputation of the Medical school of Edinburgh. In 1798 he retired from all business, resigned his professorship, and was succeeded in it by his son Dr. James Home, who now fills the chair of the Practice of Medicine with so much honour to himself and benefit to the University.

Dr. Home enjoyed, until a very short time before his death, perfect possession of his strength and mental faculties, affording a remarkable instance of the effects of temperance, and regular habits, in procuring health and old age. He died on the 15th of February 1813, having attained the great age of ninety-three years and three months.

Dr. Home was the author of several works, which evince how ardently he prosecuted his professional studies. The first was "An Essay on the Contents and Virtues of the Waters of Dunse-Spaw, in a letter to Lord Marchmont," and was published in the year 1751. It contains an accurate analysis of that mineral spring, according to the most approved mode then known of analyzing mineral waters. But it is now of little use, because no department of science has made more ample strides than the analysis of mineral waters.

Betwixt the year 1750 and 1760 a great degree of patriotic enthusiasm arose in Scotland to encourage arts and manufactures; and the *Edinburgh Society* was established in 1755 for the express purpose of

improving these. To this Society Dr. Home presented two treatises, one on bleaching, and another on agriculture.

The Essay on Bleaching contained an investigation into the chemical principles of this art, as well as many experiments on the different processes employed in it, besides suggesting various improvements in its different branches. Several of these were adopted by the bleachers of this country and of Ireland, and from them the author received many flattering, and from a few, some solid testimonies of their esteem of the merit of this work, and the great benefit they had derived from it. Indeed it was considered as the standard book upon the subject, until the great extension of chemical science since the time of its publication superseded it.

The Treatise "On the Principles of Agriculture and Vegetation," was written in consequence of the same society having offered a gold medal for the best dissertation on these subjects; this on a competition was assigned to Dr. Home, and, with a few additions, published in 1757. It contains an account of various soils and manures, as far as the knowledge of chemistry could then determine, and mentions the application of chemical principles to vegetation and agriculture. It was one of the first attempts to apply chemistry to agriculture, and to show that "Agriculture is not so unscientific an art as is thought, but that it is reducible, like other arts, to fixed and unalterable principles." (p. 140.) At the conclusion of the Essay he proposes an excellent plan for the future improvement of agriculture as a science and as an art.



The “ Medical Facts and Experiments ” were published in the year 1759. They contain much useful information, principally collected amidst the bustle of camps, and discover a talent for observation, and a degree of industry, very rare *at that time*, among the medical officers of the army, but which, of late years, have distinguished many of that meritorious class of officers. In this work is given an interesting account of some of the epidemic fevers, and other diseases that attacked the British troops during the war 1742-48, which either had been omitted altogether, or not particularly described by Sir John Pringle, in his observations on the diseases of the army during that war. It also treats of gunshot wounds, a subject then very little understood in this country, and of a fatal disease in horses, the Glanders, investigated by dissection. It contains several very interesting cases, which all bear upon some particular point. Lastly, in this work are related experiments on several subjects, viz. on the comparative velocity of the blood, and temperature in disease—on the quantity of insensible perspiration in different circumstances ; and on the inoculation of the measles. This last was first proposed by Dr. Home, and from his experiments it appeared “ that the inoculated measles became a much more mild disease than the natural, not being attended with that degree of fever which precedes the natural, nor with the cough, want of rest, and other inflammatory symptoms which occur during the disease ; nor with the sore eyes, the cough, the hectic fever, or ulcerated lungs which often follow this disease,” (p. 284.) The practice of inoculating the measles has sometimes been revived, without sufficient credit being given to



the original inventor. For what reason it is not evident, it has never become a general practice, although it does not admit of a doubt, that in severe epidemics, many lives might be saved by this.

The treatise "on the Croup" was published in 17—. This disease, so fatal to children, had been occasionally mentioned by former medical writers, but Dr. Home was the first who gave an accurate history of its cause ascertained by dissection, and of its mode of cure. Since its publication, many excellent treatises have appeared on the croup, and physicians and pathologists have added much information with regard to its history and cause, but no better mode of treatment has yet been discovered than that recommended by Dr. Home, and all succeeding writers have spoken of his labours in terms of the highest esteem.

The "*Principia Medicinæ*" was first published in the year 1758, and since that period, has undergone many successive editions. It is intended to be a system of medicine, and gives an aphoristical account of the symptoms, causes, prognosis, and cure of diseases in a very succinct and clear manner, expressed in very nervous, pure and elegant Latinity. This work raised his reputation very high, especially on the Continent, and in many foreign universities it was adopted as the text-book by the Professors of the practice of Physic—and even at this day, notwithstanding the public are in possession of many similar works since published, if the Boerhaavian doctrines, which universally prevailed at that time be left out, it may be considered as one of the best and most useful books of this class of medical literature.

In the year 1780 appeared his "Clinical Experiments, Histories and Dissections," which contains the result of his observations and practice in the clinical ward of the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh. From this circumstance, such a work is entitled to a high degree of confidence, for it is the duty of the clinical practitioner to note daily the state of his patients before numerous students, many of whom are very capable of examining the facts, and of appreciating the conclusions drawn from them. There is perhaps, therefore, no situation more critical or trying in which a medical practitioner can be placed, because he is afterwards obliged to render an account in the clinical lecture of the reasons of the medical practice he adopted. In this work, Dr. Home has given several curious and interesting cases of diseases, which do not commonly occur, or the forms of which were varied; such as Melœne, Diabetes, Puerperal Fever, Ischuria, &c. The comparative effects of different remedies are distinctly stated. Many trials with new remedies in some diseases are related, as of the *Rhododendron Crusanthum* in rheumatism; the *Oleum Terebinthi* in sciatica; the *Rubia tinctorum* in amenorrhœa; the *Spigelia Marilandica* in worms; the deobstruant effects of the *Meserium* in several diseases; the effects of dry cupping in hæmorrhagic diseases, &c. All these are detailed in a very brief manner, and the practical deductions from them are pointed out. There are few medical works that contain more new and useful matter in so condensed a form. Many of the remedies have since been introduced into practice, and the mode of curing several diseases which

he first suggested, as in diabetes, has been adopted.

Such are the several works of Dr. Francis Home. But his attention was not alone confined to medicine. He delighted much in classical literature, as has been already mentioned, and we have seen several of his poems which are not destitute of merit.

Medicine is an art, and a science. In the study of medicine as a science, the theorist employs his time in rearing a system. This can only last for a short period, until new facts are discovered. These must be again arranged into a new system. Medicine, as an art, consists in the collection of those phenomena which occur in that department of nature, which relates to the animal economy, and the application of these to the cure of diseases. That physician, therefore, who employs his labours in the careful observation of facts, and the application of these to practice, renders a most important service to mankind. Both kinds of physicians are necessary to the advancement of medicine. Dr. Home must ever hold a distinguished place amongst the latter, for very few physicians have contributed more new or important facts, or have done more towards establishing the art of medicine upon the solid basis of observation and experiment.

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MR. ANDREW DALZEL.

Mr. Robert Hunter, who had been Professor of Greek for thirty-one years, feeling himself unable to discharge the duties of his office in consequence of

his advanced age, expressed a wish to the Patrons that they would appoint some person as his colleague, who should perform the active duties of the chair. Mr. Andrew Dalzel was therefore elected joint Professor of Greek upon the 16th of December 1772.

Mr. Dalzel was born in the month of October 1742. He was descended from respectable parents. His father, William Dalzel, had the chief business in the line of his profession in Kirkliston, a village about eight miles distant from Edinburgh. This was what in the country parts of Scotland is called a *wright*, which includes that of a cabinet-maker, house-carpenter, and one who undertakes to furnish the implements necessary for the purposes of agriculture. The division of labour is not known, or at least not practically recognised in country villages, from the want of sufficient employment. The integrity of Mr. Dalzel's character—his fidelity and expertness in executing any commission with which he was entrusted, recommended him to the patronage of that very intelligent nobleman the late Earl of Lauderdale, and this laid the foundation of the future fortunes of his son the professor.

Young Dalzel, according to the custom of the country, was sent to the parish school of Kirkliston. At this time the late Dr. Drysdale\* was minister of Kirkliston, and was himself an elegant scholar, and took great pleasure in encouraging the youth to perseverance and industry in the acquisition of knowledge. He early discovered these qualities in Mr. Dalzel, for the possession of which he was distin-

\* Vid. vol. ii. p. 168.

guished through life in all the various public stations he afterwards held. He therefore patronized him, and was at pains to direct the course which he ought to follow in his studies. This mark of generous kindness was never effaced from Mr. Dalzel's memory. He afterwards married his daughter, and many besides myself remember the enthusiastic manner in which he was wont to express himself respecting Dr. Drysdale's talents as a scholar, a preacher, a man of business, &c. No one could hear him expatiate upon this darling subject without being convinced that his father-in-law was, in the language of the poet, the "God of his idolatry."

It may not be improper to observe that Sir Robert Liston, lately our ambassador at Constantinople, who has filled so many other public stations with the greatest applause, was a school-fellow of Mr. Dalzel's, and was also patronized by Dr. Drysdale. The two youths went through their college course together, occupied (as I have been assured) the same lodgings, as agreeing better with their finances, and assisted each other in their studies, being at that time both intended for the church. Their early attachment never suffered any abatement, for though removed at a very great distance from each other, they through life kept up a correspondence by letter.

Mr. Dalzel attended all the classes preparatory to being admitted a student of divinity. After being in due time enrolled at the *Hall* he delivered the requisite discourses before Dr. Hamilton the professor with approbation, and was (but of this I am not certain,) licensed to preach by the presbytery of Linlithgow.

Meanwhile, he had been appointed tutor to the Earl of Lauderdale's family, and became a great favourite. The correctness of his behaviour, the steadiness of his conduct, and agreeable temper, was in a short time appreciated by his Lordship; he therefore determined to make use of all his interest, to secure Mr. Dalzel's promotion in life. Mr. Hunter's wish to retire, presented a favourable opportunity; and besides, as the Earl's eldest son, (the present Earl,) was about to enter the University, being then fourteen years of age, Mr. Dalzel's advancement to the professorship, instead of interfering with, would materially assist him in his studies.

It is universally admitted, by those who know how the politics of the city of Edinburgh then stood, that it was through the Lauderdale interest that Mr. Dalzel proved successful. The Earl at that time, in a great measure, ruled the politics of Edinburgh; and several causes concurred, to render very great interest necessary, before the election could be secured.

Mr. Dalzel was not only a young man, but being of a very fair complexion, he *appeared* to be younger than he really was. He had been only a short time in Lord Lauderdale's family, and his want of experience in the art of teaching was used against him. Again, some of the members of council favoured Mr. Duke Gordon, of whom Mr. Dalzel has given so interesting an account, and proposed a comparative trial. I have heard it stated, that this did take place, but I am of opinion that it never proceeded farther than a mere proposal. Had a trial of strength been required in 1772, no doubt can be entertained as to

the issue. Among the innumerable conversations which I have had with Mr. Gordon, he seemed to feel uneasy when the most distant allusion was made to any thing connected with that transaction. He took care to communicate no information ; but sometimes, when he was in the humour, commented at great length upon the essential services Mr. Dalzel had rendered to the University. That his esteem for Mr. Dalzel was sincere, there can be little doubt ; for Mr. Gordon in his will left him residuary legatee.

Mr. Duke Gordon was a man of extensive literary acquirements, but of very peculiar manners. His father was born in the vicinity of Huntly, and was bred a weaver there. This, besides the name, was a cause of his strong attachment to the family of *Gordon*, and inheriting principles which were much more common in his days than they are at present, he determined to name his first-born son after the head of the clan. This was the origin of the name, and not as Mr. Dalzel hints, that he had served as a common soldier under any of the Gordon family. The truth is, that when a very young man, he commenced business in Edinburgh as a linen manufacturer, which in process of time he carried on to a considerable extent, and all the heritable property which the *Duke* ever possessed, was left to him by his father.

Old Mr. Gordon was a staunch Jacobite ; he, therefore, from principle, would not send his son to the High School, but to a seminary in the Cowgate, at that time much patronized by the nonjurants of Edinburgh. The teacher of the school was Mr. Andrew Waddell, the translator of Buchanan's Psalms. He had been out at the Rebellion of 1745, and be-

ing wounded in one of his hands, he had to submit to amputation. Being an excellent scholar, he, under the patronage of Ruddiman the grammarian,\* and others of similar political principles, opened a school for instruction in the Latin language, and was a very successful teacher. After Mr. Gordon had attended this school (at which he was also taught the elements of Greek,) for a considerable number of years, he followed his father's profession. During the whole of that period, however, he never omitted to prosecute his study of the learned languages. And upon the death of his father, he entirely relinquished the business of a manufacturer.

Such proficiency had he made in the Latin tongue, that he considered himself as qualified to give instructions as a private teacher, and to translate medical theses from English into Latin. This he did at a time when that was not known as a distinct profession in Edinburgh. And, in the mean time, he enrolled himself as a student in the University, and attended the necessary classes, before being admitted to the Divinity Hall. His theological sentiments, however, not suiting those of the Scottish establishment, he relinquished the project. What those opinions might have been originally, I cannot affirm. It would be easy to enlarge upon the uncommon singularity of his domestic habits, and of his ardent application to the study of classical learning; but it is principally as a librarian, and as connected with the University, that his name is introduced in this place. His punctuality of attendance, accuracy,

\* Chalmers' Life of Ruddiman.



propriety, and dignity of demeanour, not only impressed the students who applied to him for books, but even the professors themselves. He was of the most essential service to both ; for though his manner was certainly distant, and even repulsive, yet he was always ready to answer any civil question, and to communicate whatever information was within his power, that might be required by the students. In all these respects, he must be considered as having been an invaluable treasure to the University, during the long period that he acted as under librarian, and that in his station, he materially contributed to its prosperity.

Though Mr. Dalzel might not have been so profound a classical scholar in 1772, as Mr. Gordon, yet it was a fortunate event for the University, that Mr. Dalzel was preferred. During the whole term of his professorship, no member of the College exerted himself so much, or nearly so much, in promoting the cause of literature within its walls. His patient industry in teaching his pupils the elements of the Greek language, was perhaps never exceeded. The heartiness (if I may use the word,) with which he himself entered into the minutiae of Greek grammar, —the eager desire he manifested, that the students should be improved and form a taste for the Greek authors, united with that gentle, soothing, discreet, yet firm manner, in which he conducted himself in the class, was the admiration of all. That he was an enthusiast in his profession, was very apparent ; but perhaps no one ever distinguished himself as a teacher of any language or science, or indeed of any thing, who was not. Wherever a student discovered

genius and application, such was certain of every encouragement; and he had more in his power in the way of getting young men appointed to be tutors in families, that were likely to be of use to them, than all the University besides, because he laid himself out to serve them.

The works also, which he published, for the express purpose of initiating the youth into a knowledge of the Greek language, not only produced the most beneficial effects upon his own students, but have greatly contributed to the benefit and convenience both of scholars and masters, throughout the British Empire. They have been admitted into the great English schools, and have received the warmest approbation from the most experienced teachers, as well as the best critical scholars in that country. On the Continent also, his fame as a judicious compiler, and an accurate critic, has very generally spread. An edition of them was published at Leipsic during his own lifetime.

Mr. Dalzel did not confine the attention of his pupils merely to the acquisition of a knowledge of the Greek language, by causing them to read accurately in the class, select passages from the Grecian poets, historians, orators, and critics, but he endeavoured also to give them a taste for the study of the Belles Lettres. For this purpose, an hour was set apart each Tuesday and Thursday, when he delivered a lecture upon the revival, progress, objects, and importance of polite literature. This course, however, it ought to be observed, was delivered only to those students who attended the second class. As far as I recollect, he did not scrupulously adhere to any fixed plan. But

the information which he communicated to his young audience, was of the most amusing and interesting nature. To most, if not to all of them, it was quite new, and to those who possessed any thirst for knowledge, it afforded the most exquisite delight. It was evident that he intended these lectures to be an introduction to the study of general literature; and they were well adapted to answer this end.

He also occasionally gave a separate course of lectures on poetry, of which he published a Syllabus. He was possessed of a good taste, had read and studied both the ancient and modern writers on criticism, and particularly admired the French authors on the *Belles Lettres*. He did not aim at a display of metaphysical acumen, nor originality of thought. Indeed, he had too much prudence and good sense, to attempt the latter; and he judged far better, in exhibiting to his students a compilation of excellent observations, arranged after his own method, and illustrated by numerous examples. The passages thus read, were selected with judgment, and excited great interest, being chiefly taken from the English poets.

Mr. Dalzel's claims to be considered as an excellent general scholar were very high. If it had a fault, it consisted (in my opinion) in being too fond of phrases. He was always ready to give his advice, or to assist any of his friends who applied to him. From the readiness with which favours were conferred, and the reliance that was placed upon his admirable skill in classical Latinity, many applications were made to him. To enumerate all the works which I have heard were submitted to his correction in this way, would certainly be invidious. But as he

was at no pains to conceal the fact himself, so I may mention that he translated the entire Preface of Cullen's *Nosology*, from which circumstance I am led to conjecture, that Cullen and Brown (who was understood to have translated the definitions into Latin) had quarrelled previous to the publication of that celebrated, and as yet unrivalled work. It ought not to be considered as any reproach to the memory of so very great a man as Dr. Cullen, to mention that he could not write classical Latin. How few are competent to the task, among those too who pass for good scholars! Intent upon what he considered to be higher objects, he had in early life neglected the critical study of the Latin tongue; and he was a professor in Glasgow before he set about repairing the loss. Mr. Dalzel acquitted himself with great credit.

When Dr. James Robertson's health began to decline, Mr. Dalzel was associated with him, and they were appointed conjunct secretaries and librarians to the University. With the latter he intermeddled very little, leaving the detail principally to Mr. Gordon. But he was peculiarly qualified for the duties of the former. Besides habits of uncommon assiduity, he seems to have been fond of such kind of employment, for he was also one of the literary secretaries of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and afterwards principal clerk of the General Assembly. He had a great taste for literary history, and took every proper opportunity of gratifying the curiosity of his pupils upon that subject.

Being warmly interested in whatever related to his *Alma Mater*, his appointment to the secretaryship probably suggested the idea of writing a History of the University. It is an undoubted fact that he had

begun the work, but after all my inquiries I have neither been able to learn any thing in regard to the plan, nor how far he had proceeded. The inscription above the gateway of the new buildings was written by him,\* and discovers a considerable degree of epigrammatic taste. This is a species of composition which it is exceedingly difficult to execute well. The few good specimens that are anywhere to be found, afford a sufficient proof of this, though the vulgar opinion is that no kind of writing is more easy.

Dr. Drysdale, feeling himself unable to go through the duties of principal clerk to the General Assembly which met in May 1788, was permitted to employ his son-in-law to perform the functions of an office which he himself had performed for so long a period, and with so great reputation. The Assembly only sits for twelve days, yet during this very limited period Mr. Dalzel's practical talents for business were speedily recognised, and admitted by all parties. Dr. Drysdale died in the subsequent June, consequently it was necessary for the Assembly to choose a clerk at their next meeting in 1789, and the Rev. Dr. Alexander Carlyle and Professor Dalzel, offered themselves as candidates.

Seeing the Assembly was not to meet for eleven months, ample time was allowed for a thorough canvas, and neither was idle. In short, it became a

\* *Academia. Jacobi. VI. Scotorum. Regis. Anno. Post. Christum. Natum. M.D.LXXXI. Instituta. Annoque. M.DCC.LXXXIX, Renovari. Cæpta. Regnante. Georgio. III. Principe. Munificentissimo. Urbis. Edinensis. Præfecto. Thoma. Elder. Academiæ. Primario. Gulielmo. Robertson. Architecto. Roberto. Adam.*

party question, the decision of which was to determine whether the moderate or the popular side of the church were to have the ascendancy. Every effort, therefore, consistent with the laws of the church was exerted to accomplish the end in view.

Dr. Carlyle was always considered as one of the chief leaders of the moderate party, and, indeed, had assisted at the laying the foundation of the system upon which they acted. He was extremely popular with those who took his view of church politics, and was among the oldest ministers in the church of Scotland, having been upwards of forty years an ordained clergyman. It was generally understood that these were among the chief reasons of his being proposed as principal clerk at this time. The emoluments of the office were no doubt considerable, but these could be no object to a man of his property. To secure success, government lent all the assistance in their power.

Mr. Dalzel's pretensions to the office were of a very different kind. He had never intermeddled with church politics, and, as far as I know, had never been a member of Assembly. He was, however, in the prime of life, and had already shown how capable he was of conducting the business, whereas Dr. Carlyle was nearly seventy years of age. In consequence of having been professor of Greek for seventeen years, a considerable number both of clergymen and laymen (particularly the latter) had been his pupils, and were personally attached to him. Though many of those were decidedly of the moderate party (as Mr. Dalzel himself was) yet they could not forget the obligations which they owed to their

old preceptor. He was certain of the votes of the popular party, and having adopted the same sentiments with those of his pupil Lord Lauderdale in regard to politics, he was also sure of the votes of those who favoured the minority in Parliament.

As the moderate side of the church had carried almost every question which had been debated in the Assembly for the last forty years, they had little doubt of ultimate success, but they determined in the mean time to take every prudent step to prevent disappointment. Dr. George Hill, who had succeeded Principal Robertson as the leader on that side of the house, was therefore chosen moderator. When it came to a vote Dr. Carlyle was accordingly elected by a very small majority, and took his seat at the table. It was upon this occasion that he addressed the moderator and assured the house that during the course of a long life it had been his constant study "to defend the church against fanaticism."

The Doctor, however, had calculated without his host, Mr. Dalzel's friends demanded scrutiny of the votes, which of course could not be refused, and after a very vigorous investigation, it was found (chiefly by means of the acuteness of the late Hon. Henry Erskine) that the majority were in favour of Mr. Dalzel. He therefore was declared to be principal clerk of the General Assembly of the church of Scotland.

Mr. Dalzel published very little besides his notes to the *Collectaneu Minora et Majora*. There is a paper of his in the Edinburgh Philosophical Trans-

actions upon the *Sigma Solitarium*, and a Translation of M. Chevalier's Plain of Troy. A short Life of Duke Gordon has been already mentioned. He published also a Life of Dr. Drysdale prefixed to the Doctor's Posthumous Sermons. It is a curious literary anecdote that Principal Robertson offered to write the life of his relation and bosom friend, and the offer was rejected. Had Mr. Dalzel been permitted to have followed his own inclinations, it is understood that he would have gladly accepted of it. But some of his relations were so irritated at Dr. Robertson for opposing him in the election of a clerk to the Assembly, that they would not listen to the proposal. How much this is to be regretted. One would wish to see what figure so great a master would have made as a Biographer, especially in giving an account of events in which he himself bore so great a part.

Mr. Dalzel, after a tedious illness, died upon the 8th of December 1806. Upon the whole there have been few more respectable characters, or more useful members of society than Professor Dalzel.

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MR. JOHN BRUCE.

Dr. Stevenson, of whom some account has been already given,\* was now far advanced in years, and felt severely the infirmities of old age. He therefore found it absolutely necessary to have an assistant. The patrons, who were well aware of the value of

\* Vid. vol. ii. p. 269.



his faithful services, and of the manner in which he had taught the Logic class for the long period of forty-four years, readily consented. According to the usual form he resigned his office upon the 19th, and he and Mr. John Bruce were elected upon 26th January 1774.

Mr. Bruce was born in 1744. He was descended from the ancient family of Bruce of Earlshall. His father possessed a property near Kinghorn, in Fifeshire, and died when he was very young, leaving another son and a daughter. His mother's father was the Reverend Mr. Squire, minister of Forres, in Elginshire, a man of great worth, and in intimate habits with the leading public men of the day. His grandson resided with him from the death of his father until his death, when his mother removed to Edinburgh.

Mr. Bruce was educated at the High School of Edinburgh, where he made such proficiency as, at an examination, to attract the notice of that patriotic magistrate Provost Drummond, a friend of his grandfather Mr. Squire, whose character, on that occasion, he held up for imitation to his young friend. From the High School he entered the University, where he went through a regular and complete course.

In 1764 he was one of six individuals\* who founded the Speculative Society for the purpose of literary composition and public speaking, an institution which speedily attained great prosperity. It has been the arena where many of the most celebrated men in the country have been trained for public life, and it still continues to support its high character. It is now recognised as an academical institution, having apartments in the University.

\* They are mentioned in the following life of Mr. Allan Maconochie.

Fifty years after, in 1814, when a convivial Jubilee meeting of the society was held, Mr. Bruce had the satisfaction of being present as one of the founders, and of witnessing the fruits of his early labours, in the assemblage of talent which that day exhibited, of men of the first eminence in all professions. The Principal of the University presided, and Dr. Gregory, and Sir Walter Scott were Vice-Presidents on the occasion.

In January 1774, as already mentioned, he was appointed Joint-Professor of Logic, and on the 26th October of the same year, when Dr. Ferguson got leave of absence to travel with his pupil, the Earl of Chesterfield, Mr. Bruce taught his class, "The Moral Philosophy," that winter for him.

The present Lord Melville, while at College, was placed under his charge, and with him Mr. Bruce subsequently travelled; the late Dr. Finlayson, who ultimately succeeded to his chair, supplying his place during his absence. In 1785 he was appointed, along with the late Sir James Hunter Blair, to the reversion of the office of Joint-King's Printer and Stationer for Scotland, and in 1787 Latin secretary to the Privy Council. The last course of lectures he delivered was in 1790, and he gave in his entire resignation in 1792. He had published a Syllabus of his course, and another work containing the Elements of Ethics; he was a popular Professor, and his lectures, especially those on Pneumatology, were much admired. He then removed to London, where he was actively employed in the department of the Board of Control upon Indian affairs, under Mr. Henry Dundas the President of it. He was also appointed keeper of the State Paper office, and Historiographer to the East India Company, in room of Mr. Orme, deceased. In the course of his official

labours he produced several valuable statements which were printed though not published; they consisted of “Plans for the government of British India;” “Report on the Renewal of the Charter of the East India Company in 1794;” “Annals of the East India Company;” “Report on the Internal Defence of England in 1588, against the Spanish Armada, with a view to the Defence of Britain in 1796;” “Report on the Union of England and Scotland, with a view to the projected Union with Ireland,” and several other papers on public matters. He was a short time secretary of the Board of Control, and sat in Parliament for six years. As keeper of the State Paper office, he introduced an arrangement formerly unknown, which has brought to light many curious MSS., and facilitated the future business of it. He was elected a fellow of the Royal Societies of London and Gottenburg.

He died at his estate of Falkland in Fifeshire on 16th April 1826, in the 82d year of his age.

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#### CHAP. IV.

*Dr. John Robison, Professor of Natural Philosophy.*  
*—Mr. Dugald Stewart, Mathematics.—Moral Philosophy.—Dr. John Hill, Humanity.—Dr. James Gregory, Theory and Practice of Physic.*  
*—Dr. Andrew Hunter, Divinity.—Allan Macnochie, Lord Meadowbank, Law of Nature and Nations.—Dr. John Walker, Natural History.*

DR. JOHN ROBISON.

Mr. James Russell, the Professor of Natural Philosophy, having died at the very commencement of the

session 1773, the patrons were at a great loss, not only for a successor, but for one who should supply his place, and deliver lectures upon that science for the present, in order that the students might not be disappointed.

Various candidates offered themselves for the vacant chair. I have learned, from private information, that Dr. Buchan, the author of the "*Domestic Medicine*," at one time imagined that he had interest to secure it. But in this he found himself in a great mistake. I entertain no doubt of his having been perfectly competent to teach *Natural Philosophy*. This opinion is founded upon the fact that the celebrated *Ferguson* bequeathed to him at his death the whole of his apparatus, which was then allowed to be the best in Great Britain. What materially injured the Doctor, was the book itself, above mentioned, which had been published about three years before, and yet it is a certain fact, that with the exception of the Holy Scriptures and Book of Common Prayer, no work of the same size ever issued from the British press, upon any subject whatever, that, in the same time, had nearly so extensive a circulation. Some of his strictures gave offence, and these formed an impervious barrier to his promotion on this occasion.

Another candidate was Dr. James Lind. He, as well as Buchan, had taken the degree of Doctor of Medicine at the University of Edinburgh. Lind graduated in 1768, and from the singular subject of his thesis, I conjecture that he had been sometime abroad. It is on the remittent fever which appeared in Bengal, in the course of the year 1762. It is allowed that he also was well qualified to fill the chair.

The patrons, however, determined to keep the chair vacant for one session. Two reasons have been assigned for this. First, Dr. Ferguson, who was nearly related to Mr. Russell, and had been his immediate predecessor, was willing to give a course of lectures for the benefit of Mr. Russell's family. And, secondly, through the strong recommendation of Dr. Black, Dr. Cullen, and Principal Robertson, they had fixed their eyes upon Mr. John Robison, who then held an office under the Russian government at Cronstadt. It was understood that the determination of the business should be delayed to the end of the Session, but about the middle of February, Dr. Ferguson informed the patrons by letter, that a very favourable offer had been made to him to travel with the Earl of Chesterfield, and requested permission to appoint Dr. Lind to finish the remaining part of the course. This immediately roused Mr. Robison's friends to action, and they had influence to get him appointed Professor of Natural Philosophy, upon the 9th of March, 1774, without the parties having had any communication upon the business, or knowing whether he would accept of it.

John Robison, LL.D. was one of the most accomplished scholars and eminent philosophers of the last century. Perhaps, upon a minute examination of his very varied acquirements, few if any professors of the Universities of Glasgow or of Edinburgh, since their foundation, (for he taught in both) have superior claims to our admiration.

He was born at Boghall, in the parish of Baldernock, in the county of Stirling, in the year 1739.—His father, of the same name, had been a merchant in Glasgow, and having, by honourable industry, ac-

quired some property, he purchased Boghall, where he resided at the time that the subject of this memoir was born.

Mr. Robison had determined that his son, the subject of this memoir, his youngest, should receive the best education which the country could afford. Instead of being contented, therefore, with the instruction to be obtained at the parish school, he sent him to be educated at Glasgow. He went through the usual course at the Grammar School there, and must have entered it at a very tender age, as well as made early proficiency in the Latin language, for he was enrolled a student of Humanity in the University of Glasgow at the commencement of the session of 1750, when only in the twelfth year of his age. His talent for the acquisition of languages, (among his other versatile talents,) was through life very extraordinary. The ardour with which he entered upon any study, the quickness of his parts, and the clearness of his perceptions, united to the possession of a memory very retentive, gave him many advantages above ordinary men.

It is impossible to calculate, *a priori*, what effects are to be produced upon a youth when sent to school or even to college. Eminent proficients, both in literature and science, have been educated under very dull and incompetent instructors, whilst the best qualified teachers have often had great reason to lament their comparatively ineffectual attempts to communicate the love of knowledge to their scholars. The truth is, that almost the whole depends upon the exertions of the pupil himself, for a master can do little more than point out the method of study, and the most proper sources from which instruction

is to be obtained. The wisest plan, however, is to have recourse to those masters who are the most eminent in their profession.

When Mr. Robison entered Glasgow University, every incitement to aim at excellence was afforded to him which could be derived from example or precept—at no period of its history was that seminary more distinguished by eminent professors in the various walks of literature and science. Dr. Moore was professor of the Greek language, and in the zenith of his reputation. His zeal for the promotion of Grecian literature was excessive, and the ardour which he showed in the class during lecture was much calculated to impress his pupils.\* Dr. Robert Simson, though considerably advanced in years, was still as eager in prosecuting the study of his favourite science as ever. And among the many distinguished mathematicians of the last century whom this illustrious man had reared, Mr. Robison is to be reckoned. The foundation of Dr. Cullen's well-earned fame had been already laid, and attendance upon his class had become very common with students of every description.

Under Dr. Simson he made uncommon progress in the mathematics, considering the shortness of the time that he had applied to the study. We are indeed informed by Professor Playfair, that “he used

\* Dr. Moore was blind of one eye. When interpreting Homer to his class, (I am informed by one of his pupils) he never looked at the book, and, from the numerous references which he made to parallel passages in his favourite author, it appeared that he could repeat most accurately the whole Iliad and Odyssey. He was not satisfied by a general reference to a similar mode of phraseology, but mentioned the book and even the one in which it was to be found.

to speak lightly of his early proficiency,"\* but it will be admitted that when speaking of himself he cannot be considered as an impartial judge. His contemporaries were of a very different opinion, and among his fellow students the progress which he had made in the abstract sciences was the object of their admiration. It should be observed, however, that his ideas of what ought to be denominated *proficiency* in mathematical science were at all times so exceedingly high, that very few ordinary scholars could, according to his mode of forming an estimate, be considered as having made much proficiency. I recollect that in the year 1790, a gentleman who was then attending his class, and who was very well acquainted with the elementary branches of the mathematics, took the liberty of asking him, how long time he thought would be required for a person of good talents, and indefatigable application, to make tolerable proficiency in that science, to which he immediately replied, that he considered three years as too short a period. No wonder then that Mr. Robison underrated the progress which he himself had at this time made.

According to his own account, he had not formed a decided predilection for mathematical learning until he was convinced of the absolute necessity of a competent knowledge of that science, before he could thoroughly comprehend the doctrines taught, and the reasonings employed by Dr. Dick, who was then conjoined with his father as professor of natural philosophy. He then saw more clearly, than he had ever done before, the necessity of laying a good founda-

\* Trans. Roy. Society of Edin. vol. vii. part 2.



tion, if he was ever to possess any accurate knowledge of what was taught in the class.

His genius peculiarly led him to the study of mechanics, and this tendency he discovered very early in life, so that it need not excite surprise that he was delighted beyond measure with Dr. Dick's lectures. At this time he was like most young men possessed of ingenuity, and great power of invention, exceedingly disposed to form theories without being sufficiently cautious that the *data* upon which such theories are founded really exist in nature. Such speculations pleased his youthful but ardent imagination, for he had not as yet learned that this was not the way in which nature was to be interpreted.

In the interesting account which he has given of Dr. Black, prefixed to the "Lectures on Chemistry," he mentions that the Doctor, who had no doubt perceived the natural bias of his mind, gently reproved him for indulging in such fancies, and this, too, in the course of a conversation that took place at Professor Dick's house, and was the first time that they had ever met in private. He politely invited Mr. Robison to his house, presented him with a copy of Newton's Optics, and informed him that he considered that work as a model of the manner after which our inquiries into the laws of nature ought to be conducted. Thus was laid the foundation of a friendship between these two philosophers which no untoward event ever interrupted. How much Mr. Robison profited by this salutary advice is amply proved by his future history.

The much lamented death of Dr. Dick deprived his father, the Professor, of an assistant. It became necessary, therefore, to procure some one to supply

the place of his son, for, through the infirmities of age, he was unable to undertake the labour himself. Though Mr. Robison was only in his nineteenth year, he had, during the course of the preceding year, taken the degree of Master of Arts, and was well known as a young man of the most promising talents, as an excellent mathematician, and as having made Natural Philosophy the object of his particular study. He was, therefore, recommended as one in every respect qualified to give lectures on that science. He was well known to Professor Dick himself; but in order to prevail upon the old man, his literary and scientific friends exerted all their influence to procure the appointment for him. Among others, the celebrated Dr. Adam Smith, who was then Professor of Moral Philosophy there, was particularly active. No man ever was more ready to patronise genius, or more ardent to stimulate the youth to literary exertion. Every one, who is in the least acquainted with his writings, cannot fail to have remarked the tone of liberal and independent thinking which they contain. He always acted upon his own character,\* and in the full

\* An excellent judge of character, the late Principal Robertson, thus expresses himself in a letter to Mr. Gibbon concerning Dr. Smith (vol. ii. p. 255.) "His decisions you know are both prompt and vigorous." I seize this opportunity of relating an anecdote communicated to me by the late Dr. William Campbell, who was a pupil of Dr. Smith's, about 1760 or 1761, and who was himself present at the transaction, which remarkably illustrates the observation in the text. A young nobleman, presuming upon the consequence annexed to his rank and fortune, was accustomed to behave with great rudeness and insolence to such students as appeared to be rather meanly dressed. He had selected one in particular whom he insulted and harassed whenever he met him. The young man bore this treatment for a long time. At last he plucked up courage and determined to chastise his Lordship. The next time they met was in the college yard, and, before lecture, he was as usual insulted. He seized his Lordship by the collar, and gave him such a beating

conviction that Mr. Robison would acquit himself with credit, he warmly recommended him, notwithstanding of his youth. Mr. Dick, however, considered this as an insuperable objection, so that it did not take place.

The design of Mr. Robison's father, in sending him to the University, was principally with the intention of his eventually becoming a minister of the Church of Scotland. He is represented as having been a man of great piety, and as prompted by the best of motives in chalking out this line of life for his son. But the studies of the young man had taken a very different direction—not that he was hostile to the evidence or to the truth of Christianity, or to the ecclesiastical constitution of the Church of Scotland, but he never seems to have had any taste for theology as a profession. The brilliant examples set him by Moore, Simson, Smith, Cullen, and Black, had taken a strong hold of his susceptible mind, and to rival

that he nearly murdered him. He was carried home to his lodgings, and was confined a long time to bed. Every Saturday during the session there is a general meeting of all the public or *gowned* students, which is attended by the Principal and their respective Professors. All matters of discipline are discussed at this meeting. The young man underwent a long trial, and the Principal and Professors seemed to think that expulsion from the University was a punishment small enough for such a crime. Dr. Smith had taken no part in the discussion; but when it came to his turn to give his opinion, he said, "That instead of voting for the expulsion of the young man for having chastised the most unprovoked insolence, he would rather propose that the thanks of the meeting should be returned to him for the proper spirit he had shown. He knew nothing more of him," he said, "than that he was a good scholar and a diligent student; and by chastising this impudent puppy he had set an example which he hoped the students of the University of Glasgow would long continue to follow; and he added, that if the young man had acted otherwise he should certainly have voted for his expulsion as being unworthy to be recognised as a member of their body." It is needless to add that he was not expelled, which was carried by acclamation.

them in the successful cultivation of science, was the grand object of his ambition. The Newtonian Philosophy was at that time what occupied the attention of the public much more than it has done of late years in Britain. Though the boundaries which divide *pure* from *mixed* mathematics are capable of accurate definition, there nevertheless exists so intimate a connection, that the progress of the one is at all times what may be termed contemporary with the other. And the great example which Sir Isaac Newton exhibited, was of itself quite sufficient to give a peculiar direction to the studies of philosophers for ages to come. It was when Mr. Robison commenced his studies, esteemed among a certain class, the only philosophy that was worthy of attention. Chemistry was then considered as a subordinate science, the prosecution of which, was only of use in the cure of diseases, for its application to the arts was hardly dreamed of.

Nothing, perhaps, affords a stronger proof, either of the nature of the science of chemistry, the fugitive kind of evidence of its leading facts, or the immense number of facts which, to the faculties of man, it is impossible to generalize, than the ineffectual attempts which have been made to reduce this interesting science to a system. Perhaps at the present state of perfection at which it has arrived, it ought to be called the *Corpuscular* philosophy. The same ambiguity or uncertainty hangs over that science which relates to the actions between the minute particles of matter, as philosophers have, from the earliest ages felt, when they attempted to explain the action and reaction of body and mind, but which coalescence, though it has at all times been observed, has never been satisfactorily interpreted. The greatest improve-

iments in the arts, which have been made during the course of the last century, have been derived from the mechanical philosophy. We borrowed the leading doctrines of our present theory of chemistry from the French, and yet it cannot be denied, that in mathematical science, they must at present be admitted to be much more ardent students, and perhaps their taste in the mathematics is worthy of greater commendation than that which generally prevails at present among the British mathematicians.

Mr. Robison having at this stage of his life given up all thoughts of the clerical profession, and being disappointed in his expectations of becoming Professor Dick's assistant, was quite undetermined what line of life he ought to follow, yet it was now full time for him to make the election. Whilst in this state of uncertainty he received information that Dr. John Blair, Prebendary of Westminster, had been commissioned to provide some fit person to read Mathematics with Prince Edward, Duke of York, who was going to sea in order to receive a nautical education. He readily procured the most ample recommendations from Dr. Simson and Professor Dick to Dr. Blair, but when he arrived at London he found that his information had not been sufficiently accurate, at least that some other arrangement was in agitation, and that it was even uncertain whether the Prince was to go to sea. I have been able to learn very little of Dr. Blair's history; but one thing is certain, that he was of the most essential service to almost all the Scottish literary men of his time.

Mr. Robison, whose sensibility was uncommonly acute, felt so much from this disappointment that he had taken the resolution of immediately returning to

Scotland. He had been introduced to Admiral Knowles, whose son was to have accompanied his Royal Highness. This veteran was a native of Aberdeen, and had received a much better education than falls to the lot of the greater number of naval officers, being bred at Marischal College, where, under Professor John Stewart, he had studied the Mathematics with great industry and success. He had risen in the navy by the mere force of his abilities, and was allowed to be a man of science, and a very experienced officer. He early discovered Mr. Robison's rare endowments, and as his oldest son was going to sea, he prevailed upon our young philosopher to superintend his studies.

They set sail from Spithead in the fleet which was intended to co-operate with the land forces in the reduction of Quebec in 1759. In the course of the voyage Mr. Robison was ranked as a Midshipman, and he was an eye-witness of the various operations which were carried on at this time. He happened to be in the boat in which General Wolfe was, when he went to visit some of his posts upon the evening preceding the battle. The General repeated to an officer sitting next to him *Gray's Elegy*, which had been lately published, and added, "That he would prefer being the author of that poem to the glory of beating the French to-morrow."\* So that, it would appear, this much lamented military commander

\* This anecdote of General Wolfe may remind the classical reader of the words which Cicero puts in the mouth of Brutus, when he replied to the eloquent eulogium pronounced by Atticus on the eloquence of Julius Cæsar.—"Hanc autem, inquit, gloriam, testimoniumque Cæsaris, tuæ quidem supplicationi non solum, sed triumphis multorum antepono." The whole passage is very striking, and illustrative of the same sentiment which the general expressed. Vid. Brutus, sive de claris oratoribus. Elzev. edit. vol. i. p. 591.

added to his other great qualifications an excellent taste in poetry.

Upon Mr. Robison's return to England he appears to have been disgusted with a seafaring life, and disposed to direct his views to the study of Theology. His patron Admiral Knowles, however, diverted him from this project by inviting him to the country to assist him in conducting some experiments in which he was then engaged. What this employment was is not stated, but it is probable that it related to ship-building, an art which the Admiral had studied with great attention. When Lieutenant Knowles was appointed to the command of the *Peregrine*, a sloop of war of twenty guns, Mr. Robison accompanied him to sea. They convoyed the fleet to Lisbon. Having landed there for a few days, he had an opportunity of seeing the great devastation which the earthquake had occasioned about four years before. Upon his return to England in the month of June, he left the sea service, but was recommended by Admiral Knowles to Lord Anson, then first Lord of the Admiralty, as a proper person to take charge of Harrison's Time-piece, which, by order of the Board of Longitude, was to be sent upon a trial voyage to the West Indies.

Mr. Harrison had spent thirty-five years in improving his *Chronometer* before he ventured to submit it to the judges appointed by law to determine its use in ascertaining the longitude. It is a curious fact that the account which this very ingenious artist published respecting the construction and properties of his Time-keeper is full of grammatical blunders, and that though these were pointed out to him previous to its being printed, yet so self sufficient and obsti-

nate was he, that he would allow of no corrections, and it was given to the world in the same state in which he originally had composed it. Mr. Robison, accompanied by Mr. Harrison's son, set sail in 1762 for Jamaica, and having remained at Port Royal only for a few days, returned by the Merlin sloop of war after an absence of more than four months. In their voyage home they very narrowly escaped shipwreck. Upon their arrival at Portsmouth they found that the whole error, from the first setting sail, would not amount, in the latitude of Portsmouth, in distance to an error of twenty miles. Mr. Harrison, therefore, received a reward of £10,000 sterling.

Mr. Robison had not the precaution to make an agreement with the Admiralty, that upon his return he should obtain a suitable reward for his trouble. He relied with the utmost confidence upon Lord Anson's assurance that his claims should not be neglected. The generosity of his nature in this instance exceeded his prudence, and ought to be a warning to every one how they should conduct themselves in transacting business with public bodies, or with men in power. Lord Anson, upon whom his chief dependence was placed, was so ill that he could not attend to business, and died soon after. Admiral Knowles had retired disgusted with administration, so that the only resource which was left to Mr. Robison was to petition the Admiralty himself. This he did in various shapes, but he had the mortification to find that no attention whatever was paid to his remonstrances. All the remuneration to which he aspired, was that of being offered the appointment of purser in a ship of war.

Being thus disappointed in his expectations of re-



ceiving a suitable reward for his trouble, he again directed his views to the church. But from various causes this project did not succeed. He therefore repaired to Glasgow, and renewed his intimacy with his old friends, particularly with Dr. Black, who had already proposed his theory of latent heat, and with Mr. Watt, the celebrated improver of the steam-engine. In consequence of the renewal of his connection with these philosophers, his attention was more peculiarly directed to the study of Chemistry than it had hitherto been. This science might be considered as being then only in its infancy. He entered however upon the study of it with his characteristic energy, and in a comparatively short period made himself master of what was at that time known respecting it.

It has been already mentioned, that Dr. Black was elected professor of Chemistry upon the 30th of April 1766. When he resigned his office in the University of Glasgow, he recommended Mr. Robison as a successor, who was accordingly preferred to the chair. He was elected for one year only, but the ability with which he acquitted himself during the first course, secured to him the possession of the office as long as he might choose to retain it. About this time, besides other pupils, Mr. Charles Knowles, now admiral Sir Charles, was placed under his care.

The strong partiality of the first Admiral Knowles to Mr. Robison had on several former occasions produced considerable effects upon the destinies of our young philosopher. The empress of Russia had determined to improve and to increase her navy. She therefore applied to the British government request-

ing that a person well skilled in nautical affairs, both in theory and practice, might be permitted to repair to Russia to superintend and direct such improvements as he might deem proper. This request was generously complied with, and the person who was selected for this important office was Admiral Knowles, though now at a very advanced period of life. He had been engaged after a similar manner in Portugal about fifty years before. Notwithstanding his age, he agreed to undertake the task, and the first object to which he directed his attention, was to secure Mr. Robison as secretary, being fully aware of the extent and accuracy of his scientific and practical knowledge respecting those subjects which would necessarily come under review.

The revenue which Mr. Robison derived from his lectureship was very inconsiderable, for he was not incorporated as a professor in the University, and might rather be considered in the light of a private teacher under the patronage of the University. He was accordingly induced to accept of the invitation, and towards the end of December 1770 they set out for St. Petersburg, Mr. Robison having previously given in his resignation to the University as lecturer on chemistry.

The state of civilization in Russia was at that time much worse than it is at present, and the intercourse which was maintained between the inhabitants of that immense empire and the other nations of Europe was comparatively small. They were just emerging from a state of barbarism, even in those districts which were justly considered as being the most civilized. It need not excite surprise, therefore, that

neither the admiral nor Mr. Robison found their situation so agreeable as they were given to understand. The Russian intercourse with France had been much greater than with any other European country, and the whole detail of their marine establishments was principally copied from those of France. Admiral Knowles was appointed President of the Board of Admiralty, but from the cause just now mentioned, it was speedily found that an official secretary was not needed. Mr. Robison therefore only held the office of private secretary to the Admiral.

Although the Admiral had to encounter great difficulties in the discharge of his public duty, in consequence of the ignorance, the jealousy, and selfishness of those over whom he presided, and who had been accustomed to have the sole direction of the marine department in the Russian service, yet with the assistance of Mr. Robison considerable improvements are said to have been introduced into the Russian navy. But both the Admiral and Mr. Robison felt their situation very irksome. They had begun the enterprize with the sincere desire of fulfilling their engagements to the Empress in the most faithful manner, and perhaps seldom or never was practical and theoretical skill possessed in a superior degree by any two individuals, in the line in which the exertion of their talents were now required. The opposition they met with was so discouraging, that in a short time they would have been glad to have got quit of their engagement. This, however, took place in the course of about two years, for it does not appear that any limited time was specified during

which their services were wanted. What remuneration Admiral Knowles received from the Russian government I never heard, but the impression which Mr. Robison had made, induced those in power to offer him "the Mathematical chair attached to the Imperial Sea Cadet Corps of nobles at Cronstadt." This took place in 1772. Previous to his admission to this office, before he could be raised to the rank of Colonel, it was necessary that he should prove himself a *Gentleman*, which was accordingly entered upon record. Its duties consisted in delivering lectures as professor, and in inspecting the marine cadets, who are said to have then amounted to about four hundred. When he entered upon the discharge of this office, the salary of his predecessor was doubled. As a striking instance of the quickness and versatility of his parts, as well as of the great application of which he was capable, I have been assured by some of his friends, that in the space of nine months he could both write and speak the Russian language with considerable propriety.

When the Russian government was informed of the offer which had been made to him to be professor of natural philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, the greatest desire was expressed to retain him in the situation which he had filled with so great credit. Very flattering prospects were held out to him, but after weighing the matter most deliberately, he at last formed the resolution of accepting of the invitation, and in June 1774 sailed from Cronstadt for Leith. The Empress, instead of being offended at him, settled a pension upon him of four hundred rubles,

or L.80 Sterling per annum, and at the same time requested that he would superintend the education of a few cadets who should accompany him to Scotland. This annuity, however, was continued for a very short time, being paid only during the three years that the gentlemen remained in Scotland. It is said that it was expected that he should transmit, from time to time, an account of the improvements which were introduced into the British navy. The American war broke out about this time, and to have done so would not only have exposed him to danger, but what to a man of his high sense of honour was more valued, would have discovered disaffection to the government under which he lived, and perhaps bordered on treason.

High expectations were formed of his lectures, yet notwithstanding his acknowledged great abilities, the students complained of their obscurity. A very competent judge, Mr. Playfair, has given it as his opinion, that this did not proceed from the depth of the mathematical demonstrations, but rather from the rapidity of his discourse, which was in general beyond the rate at which accurate reasoning can be easily followed. He introduced also comparatively few experiments, which rendered his lectures less inviting to such students as had not made very considerable progress in the mathematics.

In the year 1783, the Royal Society of Edinburgh was incorporated by a charter from the King. Mr. Robison was one of the original members, and was unanimously chosen general secretary. He discharged the duties of his office with the entire approbation of the Society till within a few years of his

death, when the delicate state of his health rendered it necessary for him to decline continuing his services. The transactions of that learned body contain several papers contributed by him which possess singular merit. In 1798 he published a work which excited great notice. The agitated state of Europe at that time, and for some years before, is well known to every one. He attempted to prove that the French revolution, and all the disastrous consequences which accompanied that event, originated in Lodges of Freemasons. It was entitled, *Proofs of a Conspiracy, &c.* The book had an extraordinary run, and the public mind was in so paralysed a state that great difference of opinion existed respecting the theory it contained. Now when the passions of men have had time to subside, it is generally admitted that the professor has carried his theory too far. It is written, however, with great spirit and ingenuity.

Besides contributing some very valuable papers to the *Edinburgh Encyclopædia*, the executors of the late Dr. Black prevailed upon him with some difficulty to undertake the task of becoming the editor of the lectures of that celebrated professor. He performed this with singular ability, and independently of the life, the notes which he subjoined, added greatly to the value of the work. These lectures were published in 1803. Previous to their publication, he received from the University of Edinburgh the degree of LL.D.

Dr. Robison had long projected the publication of the substance of his own lectures, but from various causes, the infirm state of his health particularly, he had never been able to finish to his mind what he in-

tended. In the year 1804, however, he published the first volume of "The Elements of Mechanical Philosophy, being the substance of a Course of Lectures on that Science." It includes Dynamics and Astronomy; and the best judges have pronounced it to be a work of great merit. But the period was now fast approaching when the world was to be deprived of his labours. On Monday the 28th of January 1805, he delivered a lecture as usual to his class, and afterwards took his accustomed walk. Upon his return home, however, he was seized with a severe illness which put a period to his life in forty-eight hours. Ever since the year 1785, he had been affected by a disease which baffled all medical skill. It assumed no definite character, and seemed to be a general disorder of the whole system.

From the brief account which has been given of Dr. Robison, an imperfect idea may be formed of his very uncommon talents, and of the high degree of cultivation to which they had attained. His eminence as a scholar and a man of science, is not often to be met with. He had a facility in the acquisition of languages which is the gift of very few.\* His knowledge of the mathematical and physical sciences was most accurate and extensive, he was an excellent draughtsman, possessed an admirable ear for music, and was a performer on several instruments. His countenance was very prepossessing, his features

\* I remember when I attended him, in the session of 1790-91, in one of his introductory lectures he was combating the sceptical philosophy, he deduced an argument from the structure of language, (which at this distance of time I do not recollect) but he added that he knew the case to be as he had stated it, in *thirteen* different languages.

being exceedingly regular. In his person he was tall and well proportioned in every respect. In short it is universally allowed by those who had the best opportunities of being acquainted with Dr. Robison's talents, that he was one of the most extraordinary men whom Scotland produced during the course of the last century.

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#### PROFESSOR DUGALD STEWART.

Among the literary characters of Scotland, there are none entitled to greater praise, or who have higher claims to general esteem than Professor Dugald Stewart. The proofs he has given of being possessed of very miscellaneous talents, cultivated with the greatest care, are very ample, and have been long before the public.

He was the son of Dr. Matthew Stewart, Professor of Mathematics in the University of Edinburgh, who having afforded the most satisfactory indications of an original and inventive genius in that science, had the honour of succeeding in 1747 his great master, Colin Maclaurin, who died in 1746.

Mr. Dugald Stewart received the elements of his education at the High School of Edinburgh, his native city, and afterwards entered the University. The means employed for his instruction were admirably adapted to accomplish the end in view. His father, besides being one of the first mathematicians of the age, was also a good linguist, and well acquainted with general literature, having attended the literary and philosophical classes both at Glasgow



and Edinburgh previous to commencing the study of divinity. He was well aware therefore of the necessity and benefit of those introductory studies, and spared no pains in cherishing those ideas in his son.

But he was too great an enthusiast in the pursuit of mathematical science to neglect also impressing upon him the value and advantage of cultivating both physical and mathematical truth. The kind of evidence upon which arithmetic and geometry rest is very peculiar, and seems, if the expression may be used, to come recommended with singular emphasis to minds of a particular frame; for it is a most undoubted fact, that when the taste is once thoroughly formed for mathematics, no branch of knowledge is prosecuted with equal ardour, or commands a more exclusive attachment. Moral evidence is subject to degrees, but nothing of the sort is to be found in this science. Every proposition properly demonstrated is absolutely certain, to which every one who understands it must assent.

The circumstances which attended his appointment to assist his father were rather extraordinary, that is, it did not take place in the manner in which similar arrangements are generally made. Perhaps, the town council were never consulted upon the subject, his father taking the liberty of employing him without any formal application to the patrons. Dr. Stewart's health began to decline in 1772, and he retired to the country, being under the impression that a change of air was what could afford him the only chance of recovery. Here he afterwards spent the greater part of his life, and never resumed his labours in the University. What was the precise

nature of his complaints, we have not been informed, but he survived this period almost thirteen years.

He seems to have had the fullest confidence in the capacity of his son to teach the class, notwithstanding his extreme youth. He was perhaps the youngest person that ever discharged the duties of a professor in the College, and this he did with great ability and success. His pupils respected, and stood in awe of him, and durst not use any improper liberties. The magistrates, as has been mentioned, had not exerted their authority in interfering with the professor in regard to the choice of an assistant. But this was not always the case, and perhaps in the present instance, this delicacy was shown out of tenderness to the bad health of the father, whose eminence as one of the most profound geometricians in Europe was now established upon the most solid basis.

Mr. Stewart appears to have taught the class for two or three sessions. So well pleased were the patrons with the manner in which he had acquitted himself, and seconded by the opinion of the public concerning his qualifications, it was unanimously resolved to promote him to the chair. What probably prevented this from taking place earlier was his tender age, having not yet arrived at twenty-one years, which both by the civil law, and the law of the church, it is necessary to have attained before any one can be legally installed as a professor.

This, however, was effected in due time, for upon the 14th June 1775, Dr. Stewart resigned his office, and upon the same day Matthew and Dugald Stewart were elected conjunct professors of mathe-

matics in the University of Edinburgh. Independently of having a legal title to teach the science, he was thus rendered competent to discharge all the functions of the professorship, which, in consequence of the bad state of his father's health, had been for some time suspended. He was now a member of the *Senatus Academicus*, and entitled as well as his colleagues to judge of whatever came before them.

He had obtained in the most honourable manner one of those preferments, to which literary attainments lead in Scotland. His first object was of course to prosecute with redoubled industry the science he was called upon to teach. It is unnecessary to state, that his zeal in the prosecution of general knowledge was indefatigable, and that all his habits were those of a man of literature and science. The very miscellaneous talents he possessed, and the progress he had made in the cultivation of sciences very different from those of quantity, were well known to his colleagues, and to his intimate friends, but it was not generally understood, nor indeed believed, that the versatility of his genius was so great, as it turned out to be, and of which he gave the most incontrovertible proofs.

The immediate occasion of displaying so uncommon abilities was the following. The celebrated Dr. Adam Ferguson, author of an "Essay on Civil Society," was one of his illustrious associates in the University. This gentleman had taught, with increasing reputation, for a considerable number of years, the class of Moral Philosophy. His literary fame had reached the ears of the servants of the Crown, he was therefore invited by them to repair to

a new quarter of the globe on a great and important political mission, the duties of which he was considered as in every respect fully qualified to perform. This took place in 1778.

Though the Doctor engaged in this mission, he was unwilling to relinquish his appointment as Professor of Moral Philosophy. It therefore became necessary to provide a substitute ; and the person he fixed upon was Mr. Stewart, with whose attainments for performing the task he was fully satisfied. Upon the 4th of November 1778, the patrons appointed Mr. Stewart to teach Professor Ferguson's class, and he was at the same time to do the duties of Professor of Mathematics.

The field upon which he was now called to act doubtless afforded a striking contrast to what he had formerly been accustomed. In teaching mathematics, there is little opportunity for the exercise of eloquence in the most extensive acceptation of the word. Perspicuity of demonstration is what is chiefly required, and there is no occasion for amplification in the rhetorical sense. But a course of moral philosophy, if at all worthy of the title, includes such a vast compass of miscellaneous subjects, or so great a variety of heads of discourse, all connected with human nature, that in the hands of a man of genius there is hardly any topic he has occasion to introduce which is not susceptible of a high degree of embellishment. No chair affords equal scope, and, according to the most accurate accounts, he did not fail to exert to the utmost the powers with which he was endowed.

We have not been informed what was the precise

plan he adopted at this time. It is by no means improbable that he used as a text book the Synopsis which Dr. Ferguson had published some years before. This small work contained a general or short view of all the parts of the course arranged in that order which appeared to the author best calculated to convey instruction to the youth committed to his care. In such a treatise, it is natural to suppose that he would be partial to that particular train of thinking to which he had been accustomed.

There were many reasons, however, which might induce Mr. Stewart on this occasion to follow Dr. Ferguson's arrangement. Doubtless the Doctor was a person of too liberal principles to lay him under any restraint, or to prescribe what method he ought to pursue in his lectures. Nevertheless Mr. Stewart's situation was delicate. He was only acting for another who stood high in the rank of philosophers, and was besides much his senior, and had been his preceptor. It might have been thought forward in so very young a man to attempt to introduce any innovation into the course, and it was hardly worth while, as it was understood by all the parties concerned, that in the subsequent session of the College Dr. Ferguson was to resume his usual functions. It ought also to be remarked, that the time allowed for preparation was comparatively short; and on so brief notice few would have undertaken the task. All the topics considered as separate and independent propositions were no doubt familiar to Mr. Stewart, but it is vastly different to view them in this light, and to form them into a system, upon which lectures are to be delivered. Independently of other considerations, perhaps he

felt some relief, or that his labour was diminished, by following the system which had been prepared by Dr. Ferguson. Whatever might have been Mr. Stewart's feelings upon these subjects, the lectures were delivered with universal applause, and his fame much more widely extended than it had ever been before.

Mr. Stewart continued to distinguish himself with zeal and ability as a public teacher, and no change took place in his situation till 1785, and in this arrangement also Dr. Ferguson had a share. Notwithstanding that the Doctor was most remarkable for the greatest temperance and abstemiousness, and though he lived to extreme old age, being ninety-three when he died ; yet he very early felt that his constitution was infirm, and required the utmost care. He had been subjected to a violent malady about this time, and was much inclined to resign his professorship. It is not unlikely that he was sensible of infirmity long before it was observed by his friends, or even known to his own family. At last, however, when only fifty-two years of age, he formed the resolution of accomplishing his purpose. He was nevertheless strongly attached to an academical life, and was unwilling to have no connection with the College. For this purpose, it was agreed, that he and Mr. Stewart should exchange professorships, and that the Doctor should have a colleague to teach the mathematical class. Upon the 18th of May, 1785, they both resigned their offices into the hands of the patrons, the Magistrates and Town Council—and upon the 20th of the same month, Mr. Stewart was elected Professor of Moral Philosophy, and Dr. Adam Fer-

guson, and the Rev. John Playfair conjunct Professors of Mathematics.

Mr. Stewart had now arrived at what seems to have been the height of his ambition, for there is little doubt that he had fixed his eye upon this professorship, at least from the time that he first taught the class. His mind was not as formerly, distracted between dissimilar and opposite pursuits, he therefore determined to concentrate the whole bent of his genius to the illustration of those important truths it was now his more particular business to teach.

The philosophy of human nature is comparatively of very modern growth. Those writings of the ancients which have been transmitted to us, chiefly contain a system of rules by which the conduct ought to be regulated. They seem hardly ever to have examined, with scrupulous attention, the nature of the human constitution, or those faculties of which it is possessed. This was first attempted by the celebrated Mr. Locke, and since his time, great advances have been made in this branch of knowledge. In Scotland, the study of the science of mind had become very popular, and was prosecuted with uncommon ardour in all the different Universities. The writings of Dr. Hutchison certainly produced a considerable effect, but it was the publications of that extraordinary man David Hume, that called forth the energies of the Scottish philosophers, and in the north of Scotland in particular, gave rise to what may not improperly be called, the foundation of a new school of philosophy—at least which gave a new direction to the studies of those who cultivated intellectual science.

At the time when Mr. Stewart commenced his splendid career, the philosophy of Dr. Reid was in the zenith of its reputation. The "Inquiry into the Human Mind" was published in 1764, and Mr. Stewart was one of the most zealous admirers and defenders of the doctrines it contained. The station he held in the University was peculiarly favourable for the dissemination of those doctrines, and he did not fail to improve every opportunity of making them known. The popularity of his manner produced a great effect, so that his class was more numerously attended than it had ever been during the time that any of his predecessors had taught it. Every thing contributed to bring this about.

For several years after his appointment to the chair, he made use of Dr. Ferguson's Text Book, but at last he published one of his own, entitled "Outlines of Moral Philosophy." At first he indulged himself in the warmth of extempore discourse. He spoke from short notes, and the animation of his manner, together with his eloquence, excited the highest degree of interest. He appeared perfectly master of his subject, never hesitated nor seemed at a loss, but with a natural fluency, united to the most distinct articulation, delighted his hearers. The style in which these philosophical doctrines were delivered, was so remarkable for simplicity and perspicuity, and so admirably suited to the subject, that he secured the attention of the youth and the numerous audiences to which his instructions were addressed. His oratorical powers were of the first rank, and much calculated to make an indelible impression upon his pupils.

About the year 1790 or 1791, he discontinued the



practice of extempore speaking. He had formerly delivered his lectures standing, but when he determined to read them, he did it sitting, and persisted in this, as long as he held the professorship. One would have expected, that this alteration must have materially affected his mode of delivery, and that the reading of what he had committed to writing would not have been so pleasing to his audience, and diminished the effect upon them. But this was not the consequence. It is an undeniable fact, that there was very little difference even in the manner. Rhetoricians have laid it down as an incontrovertible criticism, that "spoken eloquence is different from written eloquence," and so it is, if what is read in the closet without the aid of being set off by the orator, be contrasted with what is spoken, accompanied with all the embellishments he is capable of giving it. But Mr. Stewart's case was very different from this. He read his own composition, and strongly impressed with the illustrations, he knew where the emphasis ought to be laid, so that it might almost be termed spoken eloquence.

The most natural reason to be assigned for Mr. Stewart not commencing to read his lectures from the very first is, either that they were not fully written out, or perhaps were not exactly to his mind. During those few years, it may be supposed, that he was occupied habitually in the most intense study. The improvement of his lectures was always a favourite object to which every thing else was made to submit, as being of secondary importance. His ideas of excellence were very lofty, he therefore spared no pains, and was determined to distinguish himself

among his contemporaries. As long as his health permitted, he was indefatigable in his application to literature and science, and his labour was crowned with success. Those parts of his lectures which he thought proper to present to the public, afford sufficient specimens of the excellence of the course, and how much they were fitted to arrest attention.

About this time, his generous disposition was remarkably exemplified, by the kindness which he showed to another of his colleagues, who stood in need of his assistance. This was Dr. John Robison, Professor of Natural Philosophy. Unfortunately, Mr. Robison was seized with an acute disease, accompanied with excessive pain, which often entirely unfitted him for discharging the duties of the class. Upon one of these occasions, Mr. Stewart frankly undertook the task; but how long he taught the class, whether for the whole or only part of a session, we are not informed. The same success attended him here, as when he lectured for Dr. Ferguson.

Natural philosophy is intimately connected with mathematical science, without which, indeed, it cannot be taught with any success. A peevish critic may therefore be disposed to say, that after Mr. Stewart had taught the mathematics for so long a period, it was no great exertion for him to supply Dr. Robison's place. But this is a very unfair statement of the case; and we are persuaded, that no one who is aware of the difficulties to be encountered, would hazard such an opinion. Mr. Stewart, in this instance, gave a singular specimen of his abilities, and how well his knowledge was marshalled, that

upon so short notice, he could engage in so unexpected an undertaking.

The facts that have been stated, contain a sufficient demonstration, that Mr. Stewart's talents were not confined to a single science. But he was also an elegant writer, and the biographical accounts he has given of several eminent literary characters, are interesting in the highest degree, and at the same time show a correctness of taste in the art of composition, which is seldom to be met with. The first specimen in regard to time, which was laid before the public, was "An Account of the Life of Dr. Adam Smith, Author of the Wealth of Nations." This was a gentleman whose company and conversation he had long enjoyed, and of whose genius he was a warm admirer. They were united by a similarity of pursuits; and though the Doctor was much his senior, yet a friendship was formed between them, which was only dissolved by the death of the former.

Dr. Smith was one of those extraordinary men, that sometimes appear in the world, and, in the words of Mr. Stewart, "was destined not only to extend the boundaries of science, but to enlighten and reform the commercial policy of Europe." He was born at Kirkaldy, Fifeshire, in 1723, and received the early part of his education there. In 1737, he was sent to the University of Glasgow, where he remained till 1740, when he went to Baliol College, Oxford, as an exhibitioner on Snell's foundation. After a residence at Oxford of seven years, he returned to Kirkaldy, and lived with his mother, engaged in study, but without any fixed plan for his future life. Under the patronage of Lord Kames,

he read lectures on Rhetoric and the Belles Lettres, at Edinburgh in 1748. In 1751, he was elected Professor of Logic in the University of Glasgow, and in the subsequent year removed to the professorship of Moral Philosophy, in the same University.

It was while professor in this seminary, that in 1759 he published "The Theory of Moral Sentiments." Mr. Stewart has given an admirable analysis of this ingenious performance, and which, notwithstanding what may perhaps be called the dryness of its title, that is, its apparently being uninviting, and little calculated to attract general readers, is one of the most interesting, amusing, and eloquent treatises in the English language. The idea of making sympathy the foundation of morality, has certainly the merit of originality; but it has had few proselytes. This seemingly paradoxical proposition, is, however, illustrated with so much ingenuity and eloquence, and so many facts and circumstances are made to bear upon it, and which come home to the feelings of every one, that it may be safely affirmed, the book will be read as long as the English language shall exist. The view which is given in the conclusion of the different systems that have been popular in different ages and countries, is very masterly, and, though necessarily brief, is not surpassed by any similar work. The clear and perspicuous statement he has given of the peculiar philosophical opinions that have prevailed in the world, shows an intimate acquaintance with Greek and Roman literature, as well as the history of modern philosophy. Perhaps, after all, it must be admitted, that this is the most valuable part of the work.

But Dr. Smith's great merit as a philosopher is principally derived from "The Wealth of Nations." This is unquestionably one of the most original and profound works which the last age produced. By its publication, a new era may be said to have commenced. The luminous views it contained respecting that most important science, political economy, are universally known; and there is no gentleman of liberal education in this country, who has not perused it. For half a century, it has been considered as a standard work; and it is astonishing how little has been added to the stock of elementary knowledge during the whole of that time. Mr. Stewart has also analyzed this work at considerable length, and has given a very fair exposition of its doctrines.

He has also related, in a very interesting manner, the events that befel his friend, whilst he accompanied the Duke of Buccleugh on his travels, when they visited Paris, Thoulouse, Geneva, &c. The society they enjoyed in those places, included the most eminent literary characters which were then to be found on the Continent of Europe.

The narrative respecting his connection with Mr. Hume, and the intimacy that subsisted between these two eminent philosophers, exhibits them in a striking light. They were both passionately fond of literature, and lived on terms of the most unreserved friendship. "It was a friendship," observes Mr. Stewart, "on both sides, founded on the admiration of genius, and the love of simplicity, and which forms an interesting circumstance in the history of each of these eminent men, from the ambition which both have shown to record it to posterity."

Mr. Stewart next wrote an account of Dr. William Robertson, late Principal of the University of Edinburgh.

The uncommon merit of the historical compositions of Dr. Robertson, is estimated with great candour by Mr. Stewart. Their peculiar excellencies are pointed out, and the criticism upon his works will be acknowledged by competent judges, not to degenerate into fulsome panegyric, though certainly favourable, but to contain a very fair appreciation of the character of that illustrious historian. It is a curious fact, that no writer of history, either in ancient or modern times, has been more equal to himself, and few have ventured to treat of so great a variety of subjects, as Dr. Robertson.

The events which occurred in the Doctor's public life, are related with great modesty and judgment. No one had a better opportunity than Mr. Stewart of being acquainted with the uniform discretion and address with which, as head of the University, the business of the College was conducted by the Doctor; and as a proof of this, we are told, that during the thirty-two years of his presidency, the *Senatus Academicus* never came to a vote upon any subject which ever came before them. Such was the unanimity that prevailed, and so great the influence of his character. Among so numerous a body, any thing similar has seldom or never occurred.

It is well known, that for many years the Doctor was the acknowledged leader of one side of the church. When he became a clergyman, the politics of the church of Scotland were in a very unsettled state. The law of patronage, in particular, besides

several other points of difference, had occasioned great dissension. To manage a popular assembly, that had never been accustomed to submit to any leaders, and where the regular forms of conducting public business were hardly known, was no ordinary enterprize. This, however, the Principal attempted; and in the issue was successful. Various instances are adduced by Mr. Stewart, in which his moderation was conspicuous, whilst at the same time, the ecclesiastical law of the land did not suffer the least relaxation, but was allowed to take its course. A General Assembly, in those days, was as different from what it is at present, as can well be imagined. Upon the whole, this memoir of so celebrated a man, cannot fail to please every one who peruses it.

The last biographical memoir which he published was that of Dr. Thomas Reid, Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow, and with which he expressed his hopes, that his labours in this particular branch of literature would be closed.

This eminent philosopher was son of the Rev. Lewis Reid, minister of Strachan in Kincardineshire, and was born in 1710. About the age of twelve or thirteen, he was entered as a student in Marischal College. It was then the practice for the same professor to carry the same set of pupils through the whole course, which lasted three years, and to instruct them both in the languages and in philosophy. His master was Dr. George Turnbull, who afterwards attracted some notice as an author. The sessions of the college were extremely short, and the education slight and superficial. He afterwards attended the divinity hall, and in due time was licensed to preach. In



1737 he was presented by King's College, Aberdeen, to the living of New Machar, where he remained fifteen years, and in 1752 the professors of the same seminary elected him professor of philosophy. In 1764 he removed to Glasgow, and succeeded Dr. Smith.

He appears to have directed his attention very early to the investigation of those subjects, in the study of which his future life was chiefly occupied. During his residence at New Machar, Mr. Stewart informs us, that the greater part of his time was spent in a careful examination of the laws of external perception, and of the other principles which form the ground-work of human knowledge. These are treated of in the "Inquiry into the Human Mind," and the impression it produced was the chief cause of his being invited to Glasgow.

We are informed by Dr. Reid himself, that he never thought of calling in question the principles commonly received with regard to the human understanding until the "Treatise of Human Nature" was published in 1739. The reasoning of this author appeared to be so just, that there was a necessity to doubt the principles upon which it was founded, or to admit the conclusion.

For his own satisfaction, therefore, he entered into a serious examination of the principles upon which this sceptical system is built, and was not a little surprised to find, that it leans with its whole weight upon a hypothesis, which is ancient indeed, and has been very generally received by philosophers, but of which he could find no solid proof. This hypothesis is, That nothing is perceived but what is in the mind



which perceives it: That we do not really perceive things that are external, but only certain images and pictures of them imprinted upon the mind, which are called Impressions and Ideas. He resolved to inquire into this subject anew, without regard to any hypothesis, and the fruit of this inquiry was presented to the public in 1764.

This work may be considered as laying the foundation of the philosophical system which he reared and taught for many years with so signal success. It is drawn up with great perspicuity, and contains a fund of original remark which does the author infinite credit. What he afterwards published on the Intellectual Powers (this was dedicated to Mr. Stewart and Dr. Gregory) and on the Active Powers of Man may be looked upon as ramifications of the same philosophical principles laid down in the Inquiry.

Though it must be confessed that Mr. Stewart was much indebted to Dr. Reid, and that the philosophy he taught both in his lectures and in his writings bore a great resemblance to the Doctor's, yet it must not be supposed that he was a slavish imitator, or that he was contented with a bare exposition or illustration of that system. Every man who cultivates that species of literature, and gives equal attention to the operations of his own mind, will feel and perceive alike with the rest of mankind. Mr. Stewart could also bestow time and attention upon the investigation. Enjoying the leisure of an academical life, disengaged from the pursuits of interest and ambition, he was in possession of every advantage that could be desired. By the publication of the

"Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind," he gave ample proof how his time had been employed. This work comprises one of the most clear and comprehensive systems of philosophy to be found in the language, and the style in which it is written may be recommended as an admirable model for such kind of disquisitions. From it a tolerable idea may be formed of the extent of the course, and what a variety of interesting topics were discussed.

In 1810, Mr. Stewart published a quarto volume of Philosophical Essays. They are divided into two parts, and are evidently (if we mistake not) detached lectures, which he was accustomed to deliver to the class. The first part, which consists of five Essays, contains a very distinct history of the Ideal theory, of its origin and consequences. The first Essay is on Locke's Account of the Sources of Human Knowledge, and its influence on the doctrines of some of his successors. The second, on the Idealism of Berkeley. The third, on the influence of Locke's authority upon the philosophical systems which prevailed in France during the latter part of the eighteenth century. The fourth, on the Metaphysical Theories of Hartley, Priestley and Darwin, and the fifth, on the Tendency of some late Philological Speculations.

The subjects treated of in the second part, are, first, On the Beautiful ; second, On the Sublime ; third, On Taste, and fourth, On the Culture of certain Intellectual Habits connected with the first elements of Taste. It is sufficient to observe in this place, that in all these Essays, the same tokens of accuracy of thought, and expression, as well as philosophical acuteness, for

which the author is so remarkable, are to be discovered. The criticisms he has made upon the writings of some of our most popular authors are well worthy of attention. But we must refer to the Essays themselves, where the reader will find many confirmations of what we have now hinted.

During the session 1809-10, Mr. Stewart felt his health so much impaired, that he availed himself of the assistance of his friend, Dr. Thomas Brown, to lecture for him; and in May 1810, he resigned his chair, and was elected conjunct Professor of Moral Philosophy, along with Dr. Brown, after which he retired from the University, retaining the title of *Emeritus Professor of Moral Philosophy*, to which he had so well founded a claim. He occupied Kinneil House, Linlithgowshire, a seat of the Duke of Hamilton.

Notwithstanding the precarious state of his health, he continued his literary pursuits to the end of his life, having prepared for the press, and published, the "*Philosophy of the Active and Moral Powers of Man*," in 2 vols. 8vo. but a few months before his death.

He died in 1828, in the 75th year of his age.

To conclude, the University of Edinburgh never had a more useful nor a more eminent Professor. He raised himself by his talents, and the celebrity of his writings, to the very first rank in the literary world, and his memory will be long revered by the numerous pupils, who, with gratitude remember how much they have profited by his instructions.

## DR. JOHN HILL.

Professor George Stuart formerly mentioned, was either really ill, or feigned himself to be ill, in the course of the year 1775. Upon the twenty-first June of that year, he resigned his professorship into the hands of the patrons of the University, and upon the twenty-eighth of the same month, they elected him and Dr. John Hill, as joint professors of Humanity, or of the Latin language.

The transaction between these gentlemen, has never been properly explained. It was entirely conducted between themselves. The town-council, as patrons, took no other interference in the business, than that they were certified that Dr. Hill was a man of good character, and competent to the discharge of the duties of the office. The common practice is, that when a professor retires, but does not totally resign his connection with the College, he retains the salary, and is styled an *emeritus professor*, but his colleague receives all the fees paid by the students. This was not the arrangement which was adopted in the present case. Dr. Stuart was to have the whole salary, and a certain proportion of the fees. What that was, is not known. After the conclusion of the transaction, he repaired to the country, speedily recovered his health, and lived for eighteen years afterwards.

John Hill, LL.D., was born at St. Andrews, where his father was minister. He received the early part of his education at the grammar school of

that city, and went through the regular course at the University, being originally intended, I believe, for a minister of the gospel. He was appointed, when a young man, professor of Humanity in the University of St. Andrews. He taught two classes in Edinburgh. The classics taught in both, were nearly the same, but in the second or senior class, he delivered two lectures each week upon Roman antiquities, &c. Besides the syllabus of his lectures, he published a work on Latin synonymes, on which he had bestowed great attention. It is too voluminous for ordinary use, and what can hardly be avoided in every similar work, refinements, and distinctions, where the differences are almost imperceptible, are frequently made. It is allowed, however, that its merit is very considerable. In the course of his lectures, he bestowed great pains in pointing out the nice shades of difference in Latin words, which were generally considered as synonymous; and this work contains an abridgement of what he was accustomed to deliver at much greater length in the class.

Dr. Hill died suddenly, upon the 7th of December 1805, and, in 1807 there appeared a Life of Dr. Hugh Blair, which he had left ready for publication. He was a man of a great flow of spirits, of a fund of humour, and in particular, was a most excellent punster.

## DR. JAMES GREGORY.

Dr. James Gregory, who for so long a period discharged the duties of a professor in the University, and maintained with so great credit to himself, the reputation of its medical school, was the oldest son of Dr. John Gregory, of whom some account has been given in this History.\* He was born in the city of Aberdeen, where his father was Professor of Medicine.

At a proper age, he was sent to the grammar school, Aberdeen, and was initiated into the knowledge of the Latin language. It was at this seminary, that the foundation was laid of that accurate acquaintance with Roman literature, and the command of an elegant classical Latin style, for which he was afterwards so distinguished. This school was founded about the beginning of the sixteenth century, by Dr. Patrick Dun, Principal of Marischal College. The magistrates and clergy of the city were appointed the sole governors, and no other persons were permitted to intermeddle in the election. Those, however, of the name of *Dun*, if possessed of the requisite qualifications, were declared to be entitled to the preference.

The study of the Latin language has been prosecuted at this seminary with great ardour and success ever since its foundation. The internal arrangements which have been from time to time adopted, and the paternal care of those who have had the management of the institution, have essentially contributed to its prosperity. When Mr. Gregory attended this school, Dr. James Dun, father-in-law to Dr.

\* Vide vol. iii. p. 104, &c.

Beattie, was rector. This was a station he held for nearly seventy years ; and during that period, he had the honour of educating some of the best classic scholars of which Scotland can boast.\*

Towards the beginning of 1765, Dr. John Gregory left Aberdeen, and came to Edinburgh, where it appears he had determined permanently to reside. Whether his son had previously to this been enrolled a member of King's College, Aberdeen, I have not been able to learn ; but upon accompanying his father to Edinburgh, he attended the literary and philosophical classes, before he began the study of medicine. He had been very early devoted to the profession of medicine ; and the whole plan of his education was formed, in order that he might enter upon his medical studies as well prepared as possible.

It does not admit of a doubt, that under the superintendence of so able a master as his father, the scheme would be skilfully contrived ; and that, assisted by so eminent a philosopher and affectionate a parent, he would possess every advantage which the most favourable circumstances could confer. There were various reasons for impressing upon him the absolute necessity of being a thorough master of the Latin language. By early directing the whole force of his attention to classical literature, he laid the best foundation for the acquisition of general knowledge ; and as no medical education was considered in those days as complete, without having spent some time at the University of Leyden, it was indispensable, that

\* Dr. Beattie was for a few years one of the ushers of this school, and left it, upon being promoted to the professorship of Moral Philosophy in Marischal College.

he should possess a ready command of the Latin language, both that he might be qualified to understand thoroughly the prelections of the professors which were delivered in that tongue, and might be able to maintain with propriety a respectable rank in the estimation of his fellow-students. He, therefore, cultivated with much assiduity, a ready elocution, and the command of an elegant Latinity.

It is well known, that the family of the Gregorys have been, for nearly two centuries, the most distinguished for the cultivation of literature and science, of any Scottish family, or perhaps of any European family in modern times. Their history affords an apposite illustration of what is remarked by Dr. Gregory himself in his "Conspectus," that children resemble their parents, not only in the expression of their countenance, and the shape of the body, but also in the dispositions, in the virtues and vices of the mind.\* In the passage alluded to, a reference is made to the celebrated Claudian family at Rome, who for six hundred years had been remarkable for their courage, cruelty, and pride,—an observation, it must be admitted, which is confirmed by the whole tenor of the Roman history. But the Gregorian family is still more remarkable; for Dr. James Gregory was the sixteenth descendant from David Gregory, Esq. of Kinairdy in Aberdeenshire, who had held a professorship in a British university.

The Gregorys had been principally distinguished for their great proficiency in mathematical science.

\* Parentes sæpe in prole reviviscunt; certe parentibus liberi similes sunt, non vultum modo et corporis formam, sed animi indolem, et virtutes, et vitia.—*Conspect. Mcd. Theor.* cap. i. s. 16.



This was what first brought them into notice,\* and indeed it was the favourite study of all the most eminent philosophers of Europe in those days. At the revival of learning the attention of literary men was almost wholly engrossed by the classics, and to excel as linguists, and be expert in applying the principles of criticism, either in the way of explaining, or publishing accurate editions of their works, constituted the summit of their ambition. To be so employed was doubtless laying an admirable foundation upon which might afterwards be reared a noble superstructure. But it was a considerable time before a due proportion of regard was paid to the sciences, which possess an equally and perhaps a superior claim upon philosophers.

It is a very common opinion, that every man has a particular genius, which more particularly qualifies him for the successful practice of some art, or making eminent proficiency in some science. This theory is probably not so well founded as some have imagined. But it is an undoubted fact, that in proof of it, a reference is very generally made to mathematicians. It may be observed, however, that the evidence upon which mathematical truth rests, is of a quite different nature from any other kind of evidence. Demonstration does not admit of degrees, whilst, moral evidence is susceptible of every gradation, from what may amount to a very high degree of certainty, to the lowest and most doubtful probability. It need not excite wonder then, that some minds have a greater relish for demonstrative evi-

\* Vid. vol. i. p. 293, &c.

dence than others, and this it is easy to conceive will naturally produce a stronger partiality to the study of the mathematics than to any other branch of science. It would be easy to quote many instances in which this tone of temper was so decided, that almost every other subject of philosophical pursuit was relinquished, and the whole bent of the mind directed to mathematical investigation. Such instances of exclusive attachment have cherished the idea of a peculiar designation of genius being requisite in order to arrive at great eminence as a mathematician.

It does not appear that either Mr. Gregory, or his father, made great proficiency in mathematics. The society cultivated by the father, during his residence in Aberdeen, was much calculated to withdraw his attention from such pursuits, if at any time he had ever formed a taste for them. None of the original members of the Aberdonian Literary Society, (of which he was one) with the exception of Dr. Reid, were eminent for their skill in mathematics, or even their knowledge of general physics. The professed object of their association was the improvement of moral science, polite literature, criticism, &c. and in accomplishing the ends which they had in view, their success was astonishing. Mr. Gregory seems, in the first instance, to have proposed these eminent philosophers as patterns for his imitation, because at no time did he zealously cultivate his talents in studying the science of quantity. In conversation he is understood frequently to have expressed his dislike to the study of the mathematics in pretty strong terms, from which it may be fairly inferred, that they had occupied only a small portion of his

attention, and that the progress he had made was very slender.

If this were the case it would be absurd to suppose that he had advanced far in mechanical or natural philosophy, because unless his proficiency in the higher geometry had been considerable, it was impossible he could enter with ardour into the real genius of the Newtonian philosophy. It was the application of mathematics to this branch of philosophy which enabled Sir Isaac Newton to explain so clearly the phenomena of nature.

The success of his near relation, Dr. Reid, in cultivating the science of mind, could not fail to give a peculiar direction to his studies. Reid's "Inquiry into the Human Mind" was first published in 1764, when he was a professor in King's College, Aberdeen. It is undoubtedly the most original and profound work which was published by any of the members of the "Literary Society." The impression which it produced on the public mind, particularly in Scotland, was astonishing. The lectures of the different professors of Pneumatology were materially affected by it; a comparatively new field of inquiry and illustration was opened to their view, and what was by way of eminence called *Reid's Philosophy*, became popular in a very short time. So much so, that shortly after its publication, upon Dr. Adam Smith resigning the professorship of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow, Dr. Reid was elected his successor. The members of the College are the Patrons, and their choice of him is of itself a most convincing proof of the high degree of esteem in which his treatise was held. The students in our

Scottish Universities enter eagerly into the doctrines taught by the professors. This, when Dr. Reid's near connection with the Gregorys is considered, could not fail to produce a powerful effect upon a person of Mr. Gregory's ardent temper. Dr. Reid's *Essays on the Intellectual powers of Man* were published in 1785, and were dedicated to him, and Professor Dugald Stewart. From the allusions which are there made, it is evident that he considered Mr. Gregory as perfectly qualified to form a correct judgment of the disquisitions which they contained; and this affords another proof of the course of his studies having early run in that direction.

When Mr. Gregory commenced his medical studies, the professors of that science in the University of Edinburgh, were men of distinguished abilities. The Second Monro held the anatomical chair—his own father and Cullen taught alternately the practice and the institutes of Medicine. Home taught the *Materia Medica*; Black, Chemistry, and Hope, Botany. Mr. Gregory attended the prelections of these able masters with the most unremitting industry, and after undergoing the usual private examinations with the approbation of the Medical Faculty, he publicly received the degree of Doctor of Medicine in 1774. The subject of his Thesis was, "*De Morbis Cœli Mutatione Medendis*," and though no novelty could be expected, it possesses considerable merit.

Meanwhile his father died suddenly, and did not live to see the medical education of his son completed, nor to witness the early anticipations which he gave of possessing those talents that for so long a series of years so essentially contributed to maintain

and to spread the reputation of the University of Edinburgh as the first medical school in Europe.

Shortly after taking his degree, Dr. Gregory repaired to Leyden, and attended the lectures of the celebrated Gaubius,\* the immediate successor of Boerhaave, whose reputation as a teacher of medicine was never exceeded in modern times, and who raised the fame of his university to the very highest pitch, and rendered it the resort of students from every country in Europe. Gaubius was his favourite pupil. Boerhaave not only possessed the most splendid talents, but was also very remarkable for benevolence and the generosity of his nature. His family consisted of only one daughter. In the course of his practice among the poor in Leyden, to whom he was most particularly attentive, he had discovered the uncommon abilities of Gaubius when a very young boy, determined to rescue him from his obscure situation, and put it in his power to cultivate those talents which Providence had bestowed upon him. With this view, his medical education had been conducted, and when Boerhaave, in consequence of the infirmities of old age, found it necessary to decline the task of public teaching, Gaubius succeeded to the chair, and acquitted himself in a manner every way worthy of his great master. Boerhaave, in medicine, was, in the proper sense of the word, an eclectic. He was much indebted to the ancients, but especially to Hippocrates. In forming his system

\* Dr. Gregory, in the address to his pupils prefixed to his *Conspectus Med. Theor.* alludes to this "*Illustris Gaubius quem præceptorem in arte Medica olim habuisse mihi gratulor.*" p. 37.

he made no scruple of borrowing from every one whatever he thought suited his purpose. He therefore, besides making ample use of the works of Hippocrates and Galen, laid the writings of the chemical and mathematical physicians also under contribution. In Boerhaave's system, however, as well as that of his predecessors little or no attention was paid to the nervous system, and its importance seems either not to have been perceived or not properly regarded. Gaubius was quite aware of this defect, and therefore was at great pains to supply it in his elegant little work entitled *Pathologia Medicinalis*. This was the state of medicine at Leyden when Dr. Gregory repaired thither.

A full account of all the circumstances which attended Dr. Gregory's appointment to a professorship in the University of Edinburgh has never been given to the public, and after consulting the records of the honourable the Town Council, conversing with gentlemen from whom I thought I was most likely to derive information, I freely confess that the account I am able to give of it is still imperfect.

Dr. John Gregory, as has been already mentioned,\* died in February 1773. In terms of the agreement inserted above,† Dr. Cullen was at liberty to make his election either to teach the Practice or the Institutes of Medicine. He preferred the former. The Patrons delayed filling the chair till the end of the session; and upon the 5th of May they made choice of Dr. Alexander Monro Drummond to be Professor of the Institutes. This gentleman was a native of

\* Vid. p. 110.

† Vid. vol. ii. p. 385.

the city of Edinburgh, in which his father was a bookseller, and who being patronized by Dr. Monro, Primus, out of gratitude named his son after him. He had received a regular education in Edinburgh, and at the ordinary time entered College. He had early chosen medicine as his profession, and after attending the medical classes he graduated in 1770. The subject of his Thesis was "*De febribus Arcendis.*"

Shortly after this he went abroad, and settled at Naples. Dr. Drummond is represented as having declined the professorship at a very early stage of the transaction. He is described as having been a man of the most elegant and fascinating manners, and the King of Naples is reported to have been so partial to him, as not to have given his consent that he should leave his dominions. It was in consequence of the intercession of royalty that he remained in Italy.

Upon the 27th of October 1773, before the commencement of the session, Dr. Francis Home was appointed to teach the class till Dr. Drummond should arrive. This he appears to have done for two sessions. And upon the 6th of September 1775, the late excellent and venerable Dr. Duncan, senior, at the time of his death the oldest lecturer in the British dominions, if not in Europe, was nominated to perform a similar duty for the ensuing session. Upon the supposition of Dr. Drummond's finally declining to accept of the professorship, this gentleman was a candidate for the vacant chair, but upon the 19th of June 1778, Dr. James Gregory was elected Professor of the Institutes of Medicine.

It is a most singular, but it is an undoubted fact, that when the Town Council assembled for the express purpose of electing a professor, no other person was mentioned but Dr. Gregory, and all that was stated in regard to him was, the Lord Provost asked the Council if it were agreeable to them that Dr. Gregory should be appointed ; no person objected, and therefore he was elected.

It has been suggested, and in my opinion with great probability, that the delays which took place were chiefly with the view of paying the way for Dr. Gregory. It was considered as too precipitate a step to promote so young a graduate to a professorship. But after having spent some time abroad, his opportunities of improvement were looked upon as having been greatly increased, and when he returned to Edinburgh it was thought that greater weight would be added to his prelections in the eyes of the students as well as of the public.

The high reputation of his father, and the connections he had formed, afforded an introduction to any preferment in the line of his profession, and thus gave him advantages which few have enjoyed. He was about twenty-four years of age when he commenced his labours as a professor, and certainly no one ever entered upon a task with more favourable auspices. His father had taught the same class with great reputation. He had therefore his father's course of lectures in his possession, which could not fail to render him the most essential assistance.

We are informed by Dr. Gregory himself, that as soon as he was preferred to the professorship of the Institutes of Medicine, he had determined, and in-



deed promised to his students to publish a text book for their use. This he accordingly did in the course of a very few years. The advantages accompanying such a work are numerous both to the professor and his pupils. It is entitled "*Conspectus Medicinæ Theoreticæ ad usum Academicum.*" The custom of delivering lectures in the Latin language upon medical subjects had been long abandoned in the University of Edinburgh, and as Dr. Gregory had not attempted to introduce a new plan, but in imitation of his colleagues lectured in English, it excited some surprise that he should have adopted the Latin language, more especially as he himself has confessed that he could have much better and more easily attained simplicity or perspicuity of thought and expression upon medical subjects by employing English than Latin. The reasons which he assigns, are, that the study of the Latin tongue was too much neglected, notwithstanding that for almost three hundred years, it had been the language made use of by the learned both in the composition of their works and their intercourse with each other, by which means a knowledge of the arts and sciences was both more speedily and generally disseminated. The natural consequence also of works on medical science being written in English was, that many excellent authors, especially the more ancient, are either totally neglected or seldom referred to. He was likewise induced to publish it in Latin, because, by the statutes of the University, all the private and public examinations, as well as the different exercises previous to obtaining the degree of Doctor of Medicine are

performed in that language, and he might have added so are all the medical *formulae* of prescription made use of in practice. He refers also to the example which the celebrated Dr. Cullen had shown him in his *Nosologia Methodica*.

The latinity of the "Conspectus" has long entitled him to be ranked as one of the best writers of medical Latin among the moderns, and is in this country in particular, esteemed as of classical authority. The work itself makes no pretensions to originality of invention or novelty of theory, but it is elegantly drawn up, and the arrangement at least is his own, which includes no ordinary degree of merit. Upon the death of Dr. Cullen in 1790, Dr. Gregory was appointed to the professorship of the Practice of Medicine in the University of Edinburgh.

In the year 1792, Dr. Gregory published in two volumes, octavo, An Essay on Liberty and Necessity. He had evidently bestowed a great deal of labour in the composition of this work, and seems to have been thoroughly persuaded of the truth of his view of the subject. No doubt, under this impression, he transmitted the manuscript to Dr. Priestley, who, under the title of philosophical necessity, is supposed to have comprehended something very little different from the fatalism of the ancient stoic philosophers. Dr. Priestley, however, would not read it, and assigned as a reason, that his mind was made up, and he had therefore long given over thinking upon these subjects. A very long introduction is prefixed to the Essay, in which an account is given of this transaction. It contains, besides, a great deal of

miscellaneous matter, and though diffuse, evidently discovers marks of genius.

It does not enter into our plan to give an account of the various disputes which Dr. Gregory had with the surgeons and physicians of Edinburgh. These occasioned much regret to the friends of both parties, and it is better, perhaps, that they should now be buried in oblivion.

Dr. Gregory was appointed first Physician to his Majesty for Scotland, and had the best and most extensive practice in Edinburgh, in which he was distinguished by the utmost benevolence and disinterestedness where circumstances called for it. He was a great favourite with the students, and contributed mainly to the reputation of the University, during a long period. He was twice married, and by his second marriage left a numerous family, of whom the eldest son was educated for the bar, and another has studied medicine.

Dr. G. was of a very athletic figure, and from his remarkably abstemious habits, had every appearance of being likely to live to a very advanced age. Being called to the country, however, to visit a patient, in returning home in a very dark night, the carriage was overturned, and unfortunately the Doctor's arm was broken, which was supposed to have ever after affected his health. Since the year 1797, he had repeated attacks of inflammation of the lungs, an illness of which nature ultimately hastened his death. He died on the 2d April 1821, in the 68th year of his age; and his funeral, which was a public one, was attended by the Lord Provost and Magistrates, the Senatus Academicus, and different bodies of the

citizens, amidst general regret for the loss of such a man.

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DR. ANDREW HUNTER.

Dr. Andrew Hunter was the eldest son of Andrew Hunter, Esq. a member of the Honourable Society of Writers to his Majesty's Signet, and was in extensive practice. He consequently gave his son every opportunity of improvement which Edinburgh could afford. The amiableness of his dispositions, and the mildness of his temper, at a very early period of his life, endeared him to his family and companions. He was sent to the High School, went through the regular course, and was entered as a student in the University. His religious impressions and devotional turn of mind had soon discovered themselves, and he was at no pains to conceal that his views were directed to the church, though heir to a considerable fortune. He attended the prescribed terms at the Divinity Hall, then taught by Dr. Hamilton, whose colleague he afterwards became, and was licensed, I believe, by the Presbytery of Edinburgh. His great patron, that is, the person who had the chief superintendence of his studies, and who by way of advice, directed him what authors he ought to read, and to what subjects he ought at this time more particularly to direct his attention, was (I have been told) the late celebrated Robert Walker, one of the ministers of the High Church, author of several volumes of very eloquent sermons, and to whom Dr. Blair has

borne so very affectionate a tribute of esteem, both as a man of talents and of genuine religion.\*

It was not long before he was presented to a living. Part of his father's property was in the county of Dumfries, and he of course had considerable interest in it. Upon the death of Mr. John Scott, one of the ministers in the town of Dumfries, Mr. Hunter was presented by the crown in 1770. He continued in that situation for nine years, and when a vacancy took place in Edinburgh, through the interest of a relation of his own, the late Sir James Hunter Blair, the magistrates of the city, who are the patrons, presented him to the New Greyfriars in 1779; and through the same channel, he was shortly after appointed joint Professor of Divinity, and thus united two offices, which in Dr. Hamilton's time, were totally separated.† It ought to be observed, however, that upon Dr. Hamilton's death, it was agreed between the patrons and Dr. Hunter, that instead of the professor of divinity being allowed the same salary with one of the city ministers, when the offices were conjoined, he should only receive L.100 Sterling, per annum; and this regulation still continues.

By a certain class of students, both his literature

\* See the last volume of Mr. Walker's Sermons.

† When I wrote the very brief account of Dr. Hamilton, (vol. ii. p. 366, &c.) I was not informed of the reason of the professorship being disjoined from that of a city minister in his case. I have since learned that the celebrated Dr. Alexander Webster was a candidate at the same time, and actually had a majority in the council. Provost Drummond, who had long managed the town politics, perceived that the only way in which he could effectually oppose the Doctor, was by preventing the union of the two offices, and succeeded.

and talents were greatly underrated ; but this appeared to me to proceed from their dislike to the view he took of Scripture doctrine. He himself was a decided Calvinist. He delivered his sentiments upon controverted points with modesty and candour. He stated the arguments on both sides with great firmness and impartiality ; but never failed in summing up the evidence, to state on which side he considered the preponderance to be. He employed Professor Pictet of Geneva's shorter system of divinity, as a text book. His full course lasted four years, this being the term of regular attendance at the Hall, previous to obtaining licence, every student had an opportunity of hearing the whole system pre-lected on. The chief defect of his lectures, was not want of matter ; but they were destitute of that novelty of arrangement and illustration, which is so much calculated to interest the hearers. There was another circumstance which impaired his popularity among the moderate clergy, and consequently among some of the students. The late Dr. James Macknight was very anxious to be elected Dr. Hamilton's colleague ; and I have been confidently assured, had written out lectures on theology with that expectation ; but would never agree to undertake the labour during the life of Dr. Hamilton, without some remuneration. The negociation was at this stage, when Dr. Hunter was invited to Edinburgh ; and in consequence of his accepting of the terms proposed by the patrons, Dr. Macknight was disappointed. Contrasts were much more frequently made then than latterly, between the two, and in general to the disadvantage of the former. No competent judge

can entertain the smallest doubt of Dr. Macknight's talents as a Biblical critic; but how he might have acquitted himself as a professor, it is impossible to say, as he was never put to the trial. I could mention several instances in the history of the Scottish Universities, of men of acknowledged abilities, making an indifferent appearance when advanced to be professors, and who did not give nearly that satisfaction which men of inferior acquirements were universally admitted to do. A great deal depends upon the *manner* in which the lectures are delivered.

Dr. Hunter's general practice was to deliver a critical lecture upon Monday, on Tuesday and Wednesday, a lecture on the system. On Thursday, he examined the students on the system, and Friday was appropriated for hearing the discourses of the students. He was far from being deficient in learning. This he not only showed in his lectures, but also in the criticisms, which he was called upon to make upon the discourses which were delivered. In discharging this part of his duty, he was much to be admired. Whatever was worthy of commendation, was always noticed by him, in such terms as were very agreeable to the author; and when he either differed in sentiment, or had any observations to make on the manner of delivery, he stated them in so conciliating a way, that it was impossible to take offence. The liberality of his views, and his Christian temper, were on such occasions most exemplary.

He was exceedingly attentive to the students, and was always ready to exert himself in their behalf in any way which they could point out. The sums of money that he gave to poor students to assist them

in the prosecution of their studies were very considerable. These were bestowed as if by stealth, and done in such a way as not to hurt the feelings of those upon whom they were conferred.

The patrons next presented him to the collegiate charge of the Tron Church parish in 1786. As a preacher he was far above mediocrity. He published several single sermons, and his sermons in the *Scots Preacher* afford a very good specimen of his taste in that kind of composition.

When any important question was agitated in church courts, he was not a mere spectator, but took an active part in the discussion. He had a very ready command of language; and from the weight of his character, and the complete conviction which both sides of the house had of the purity and sincerity of his motives, he was always heard with the utmost attention. In the year 1792, he was raised to the dignity of being Moderator to the General Assembly.

But it was as a private gentleman and a Christian that he appeared to the greatest advantage. His piety was fervent, cheerful not gloomy, and on his deathbed he evinced the same steady principle and well founded hope that had adorned his life, with expressions of gratitude to God for the many comforts which he had mingled in his lot.

Dr. Hunter was married to the Hon. Miss Napier, who died some time before him, sister to the late Lord Napier, by whom he had two sons and two daughters. His eldest son succeeded him in his estate, and his youngest entered the church, where he is a much respected and useful minister. He died in April 1809, and perhaps no man



in a public station ever passed through life more respected, or with a more unblemished reputation.

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MR. ALLAN MACONOCHIE.

Mr. James Balfour having given in his resignation as professor of the Law of Nature and Nations in 1779, Allan Maconochie, Esq. advocate, was presented by the Crown to the vacant chair.

This gentleman was the son of Alexander Maconochie, Esq. of Meadowbank. He was born in Edinburgh, upon the 26th of January 1748, N. S. It is somewhat remarkable that he is the only person now known to whom the late celebrated Dr. Alexander Adam performed the duty of what is commonly styled *a private teacher*.\* The Doctor appears to have acted in this capacity about the year 1758, when his pupil was in his tenth year. Mr Maconochie's father, whose profession was that of the law, and who himself had of course received the benefit of a liberal education, was fully sensible of the great importance of his son being thoroughly grounded in the principles of the Latin language. In order to accomplish this he determined to give him every opportunity of improvement, and he could not have pitched upon a person better qualified to communicate instruction, nor to excite ardour in the juvenile mind than the amiable Doctor, whose example and precepts could not fail to produce a lasting impression upon a youth possessed of genius.

\* *Vid.* Life of Dr. Adam.

I have not been able to ascertain the precise year when Mr. Maconochie entered the University of Edinburgh, but this is a matter of comparatively little importance. The professors who then held the different chairs, whose classes it was necessary for him to attend previously to entering as an advocate at the Scottish bar, were men of distinguished eminence in their different departments. Such men as Stevenson, Ferguson and others roused his native energies, and were the means of forming that taste for general knowledge, for the possession of which in after life he was so remarkable.

The ardour with which Mr. Maconochie entered upon any pursuit, even till within a short time of his death, is well known to his friends. But the same activity of mind discovered itself at a very early period of his career. Having laid an excellent foundation of Greek and Roman literature, he speedily saw the importance and advantages which would accompany the cultivation of the art of public speaking. He was convinced, also, that without the practical habit of exercising himself in this way, what stock of knowledge soever he might acquire, that he could never attain excellence. He and other five young gentlemen his fellow students, in 1764, formed themselves into a society, to which, as mentioned in the preceding life of Mr. Bruce, they gave the name of the *Speculative Society*. The five gentlemen who were associated with him were Messrs. Creech, Bonar, Bruce, Mackenzie, and Belsches, and they assumed at their first meeting Mr. Charles Stuart.

Mr. William Creech was the son of the Rev. William Creech, minister of Newbattle, a parish in the

vicinity of Edinburgh. After finishing his grammatical education at Dalkeith, he went through a complete course of liberal study at the University of Edinburgh. From the friendship shown him by Mr. Kincaid, an eminent bookseller in Edinburgh, he was induced to become his apprentice, and after his return from travelling on the continent with Lord Kilmaurs, eldest son of the Earl of Glencairn, he was assumed a partner by Mr. Kincaid, who soon resigned to him the business.

Mr. Creech was quickly at the head of his profession, and published the chief literary works that issued from the Edinburgh press. He was the author of several articles abounding in wit and humour, which appeared in periodical publications, and of a "Comparative View as to the mode of living, &c. in Edinburgh," addressed to Sir John Sinclair, and inserted in the Statistical Account of Scotland. A collection of these was made after his death in an octavo volume, entitled "Edinburgh Fugitive Pieces." He was several times a magistrate, and Lord Provost in 1812 and 1813. He died in January 1815, a few months after the meeting of the Society in 1814, mentioned in the life of Mr. Bruce, at which he was unable to be present.

Mr. John Bonar, was the eldest son of the Rev. John Bonar, one of the ministers of Perth. He acted as Secretary of the Society for upwards of ten years, and was highly distinguished by his talents and classical elegance. He had been designed for the Church of Scotland; but an opening presenting itself in the Excise, he was diverted from his purpose. In process of time he succeeded to be solicitor of Excise.

In the discharge of the duties of his office it was necessary for him to take an active part in the discussions on revenue questions which came before the *Justice of Peace* and *Exchequer* court, and indeed the greater number of his predecessors were on that account selected from the bar. I have heard Mr. Bonar upon such occasions acquit himself with great ability. The subjects which necessarily came under the review of that court were not susceptible of much embellishment, or of a luminous display of oratory ; but in precision of language, acuteness of remark, clearness of statement, and the art of eliciting the truth from witnesses who frequently were not much disposed to communicate what they knew, he had few superiors ; the style of his oratory was suited to his subjects. He died several years ago.

Professor Bruce has been already mentioned.\* He was nearly nineteen years professor of Logic in the University of Edinburgh, and rose to very high situations in public life. It is singular that in professions so different, such eminence should have been respectively attained, as by them and the subject of this memoir. Mr. Bruce survived all his associates.

Mr. Maconochie was in his seventeenth year when the Speculative Society was instituted. The founders were all about the same age. Meanwhile he applied with the most persevering industry to the study of the Scottish law. In the year 1768 he had completed his studies preparatory to passing as a lawyer in Scotland ; but he was anxious to increase his stock of general knowledge, and for this purpose, in the

\* *Vid.* p. 145 of this volume.

course of the same year, he visited the continent, and resided for some time at Paris. Having returned to Great Britain in 1769, he entered himself a student at Lincoln's Inn, and kept several *Terms*. He had no intention of going to the English bar, but he wished to attend the Court of King's Bench, that he might have an opportunity of observing the decisions of Lord Mansfield. He was ever after in the practice of ascribing great value to the time he spent in his attendance in this court. After undergoing the usual examinations, he was admitted a member of the Faculty of Advocates in the year 1770. Some considerable time is always requisite before any young man can get into extensive practice at the bar. Good natural abilities, indefatigable application, and powerful connections can certainly do a great deal, and in the long run generally accomplish the object in view. But still it requires time before the public repose that confidence in a young practitioner which is necessary to ensure business. In 1771 he returned to the continent, and remained in France till 1773. He visited different parts of that country, but chiefly resided at Rheims.

It has long been the practice of young lawyers to procure a seat in the General Assembly, which annually meets at Edinburgh in the month of May. Among other advantages that flow from this, young men of talents are afforded an opportunity of displaying their ability for debate, and of bringing themselves into notice. If they make a distinguished figure, their fame is speedily spread throughout the whole country, and those who decide upon their merits are allowed on all hands to be the most com-

petent and unexceptionable judges. Mr. Maconochie's first appearance in this supreme ecclesiastical court was in the Assembly of 1774, and he at that time represented the burgh of Dunfermline. During the course of the same year he married Miss Elizabeth Wellwood, daughter of Robert Wellwood, Esq. of Garvock, in the county of Fife. The first cause that he ever pleaded as a lawyer he received from Mr. Wellwood. It was probably in consequence of this connection, and that of the Prestons of Valleyfield, that he was returned as a Member for Dunfermline.

Though Mr. Maconochie's application to the study of the law was indefatigable, being well persuaded that this was the only method by which he could secure employment as an advocate, yet his attention was not confined solely to the perusal of the statute book, to the examination of cases, or the reports of the decisions of the Supreme Court in Scotland. While these occupied a proper degree of his regard, his turn for speculation led him to examine the foundation of all law, or in other words to investigate the Philosophy of Law which is sometimes called Public Law, or the Law of Nature and Nations.

A brief sketch of the origin and history of this modern science has been given in a former part of this history,\* as well as of the occasion on which a professorship was founded in order to teach it. How many courses had been delivered by the different professors I cannot say, nor even whether they all lectured; but as we have already mentioned, upon the resignation of Mr. Balfour in 1779, Mr. Maco-

\* Vid. vol. ii. p. 60, &c.

nochie was presented to the chair by the Crown. No professorship in the University was better suited to his speculative habits, and it is much to be regretted that he did not continue his labours for a longer period. His lectures are represented as having been exceedingly interesting, and as containing a great variety of new views upon subjects on which there is so ample scope for the application of historical knowledge, and the exercise of ingenuity. He only however, gave lectures for two sessions, and the reason assigned for this is, that his practice at the bar speedily became so extensive that it was impossible for him to attend to both. The lectures are in the possession of his son.

Professor Maconochie's talents, the general knowledge he possessed, his familiar acquaintance with what was necessary to acquit himself as a barrister, united with his habits of severe application to business, could not fail to bring him into notice. Great reliance was placed upon the soundness of his opinions on questions which involved any intricate point of law. As a Chamber Counsel therefore he was in great request. And in his law papers, as well as in his pleadings before the *Lords*, his acuteness was conspicuously displayed in detecting fallacies in the arguments of his opponents, or in pointing out errors of law which they had committed. He was in the year — appointed Sheriff of the county of Renfrew.

After having distinguished himself at the bar, and while he was engaged in extensive practice, on the death of Lord Abercromby he was advanced to be one of the Lords of Council and Session on the 11th

of March 1796. The title which he assumed was that of Lord Meadowbank, and in 1804, he was appointed one of the Lords of Justiciary. In both of these situations he acquitted himself with uncommon ability. He carried the same independent tone of thinking to the bench which he exercised in private, and no authority whatever swayed him in his judgments without the production of evidence, and when the institution of a jury court in Scotland was in agitation, he wrote a pamphlet entitled "Considerations on the Introduction of Trial by Jury in Scotland." Upon the plan being matured in 1815, he was appointed one of the Lords Commissioners.

When the Royal Society of Edinburgh was incorporated by a charter from his Majesty, he was one of its earliest members, and for several years before his death, was one of the Vice Presidents. His paper on the European Governments is very ingenious, and discovers an intimate acquaintance with the origin and history of those singular establishments.

Lord Meadowbank's studies were not confined to those subjects only which were connected with his profession. His pursuits were much more miscellaneous than those of most of his brethren. He had early acquired a taste for metaphysical discussion, and retained it through life. His genius seems to have had a peculiar tendency to this kind of disquisition, and upon proper occasions he never shrunk from an argument. He appears to have been conscious of his strength, and that freedom from restraint which he cherished in others, he exemplified by his own conduct.

He took a warm interest in the extension of scien-



tific knowledge, and though it does not appear that he had prosecuted to any great length the study of the accurate sciences, yet he was fully sensible of their importance, and showed his zeal both as Vice President of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and a director of the Astronomical Institution of the same place.

He entered keenly into whatever regarded national improvement. Both the liberal and the mechanical arts engaged his attention. He had at all times an accurate acquaintance with what was going forward in the political world; and in his sentiments was an admirer of Mr. Pitt's system, and that of those who adhered to the plan chalked out by that illustrious statesman. He was equally familiar with all the literary intelligence which was from time to time communicated to the public. This was the only species of luxury in which he delighted to indulge, and in this manner he was accustomed to spend such hours as he could spare from the fatigue of a very laborious profession.

During the course of 1814, his health was such as gave indications that it was far from being in a confirmed state. At last he was confined to the house, notwithstanding of which he continued to be cheerful and lively, and was as busy as ever. Medical aid, however, proved unavailing, and he died upon the 14th of June 1816, in the sixty-ninth year of his age.

Mrs. Maconochie survived him for a few years. His eldest son is the Honourable Alexander Maconochie, Lord Meadowbank. He left besides, three sons.

## DR. JOHN WALKER.

Dr. John Walker's father was Rector of the Grammar School in the Canongate, Edinburgh. This gentleman was an excellent classical scholar, and for a considerable number of years supported the reputation of that seminary, and had the honour of educating several pupils who were distinguished for the cultivation of polite literature, and afterwards known as very respectable proficient in the Latin and Greek languages.

He was exceedingly anxious that his son should be a good scholar, and therefore was particularly careful of his education. He bestowed the utmost pains in instructing him in the elements of sound learning, and in laying a good foundation upon which a notable superstructure could afterwards be raised. In this there is little doubt that he succeeded. I have been assured by an old gentleman, who was the Doctor's contemporary, that he could read Homer when only ten years of age, and during a long life his taste for the classics never forsook him.

Being designed for the church, he was sent to the University of Edinburgh, but in what precise year he entered College, I have not been able to learn. Having attended the usual literary and philosophical classes necessary before being admitted to the Divinity Hall, this took place in due course of time; and having delivered with the approbation of the Professor, the number of discourses prescribed by the laws of the church, he took the ordinary steps for obtaining

license. I have understood that he applied to the presbytery of Edinburgh. In that case, it is necessary for the candidate to be introduced to eleven members of presbytery at least, to procure their concurrence. He was licensed after having undergone the requisite trials.

He seems to have had a strong partiality for the study of natural history, botany and the kindred sciences from his earliest years. It is certain, that application to these formed through life the peculiar bent of his genius, but what were the particular causes which produced this tendency are now forgotten. The works of Linnæus were just coming into notice in Great Britain, and his wonderful success in arranging what is known in the animal, vegetable, and fossil kingdoms excited the astonishment and admiration of the philosophical world. This gave a novelty and interest to natural science which was very extraordinary. The example of Buffon operated after a similar manner; and the efforts of both probably incited Dr. Walker to the cultivation of those fascinating studies, in which he took so exquisite delight.

It is likely that soon after being licensed he was presented to the church of Glencross about seven miles south of Edinburgh. Part of Pentland hills being in the parish, this afforded him a noble opportunity of indulging his taste for botany. When he removed to this bleak but romantic station, at the proper season, he delighted to traverse these mountains, and took great pleasure in increasing his collection of plants. The country people, who had never been accustomed to see their clergyman engage

in such occupations, expressed their wonder at what could be his intention in gathering such a quantity of what they called *weeds*, and many very sage conjectures were formed upon the subject.

The Doctor was vastly superior to the most of ordinary parsons both in literature and scientific acquirements, and this superiority was speedily perceived by some of the more distinguished of his parishioners and neighbours. His company and conversation was in great request, and there were several in that part of the country who were very competent to appreciate his sterling value.

Among these was the late William Tytler, Esq. of Woodhouselee, the patron of the church of Glen-cross, and one of the principal heritors of the parish. He was already well known by his "Inquiry into the evidence against Mary Queen of Scots," and the impression which it has made upon the world since its first publication has been very favourable to the conduct and character of that princess. He was distinguished as an elegant critic, and it was Mr. Tytler who discovered in the Bodleian Library among the manuscripts of the celebrated Selden "The King's Quair," which was supposed to be lost. This he published in 1783, accompanied with a learned commentary. He was the author of various other works besides.

Another person who showed Dr. Walker the most marked attention was James Philp, Esq. of Greenlaw. He was bred to the law, and was appointed Judge of the High Court of Admiralty. He discharged the duties of this office for many years with great reputation. He was remarkable for the mild,

ness of his manners, but of the utmost decision of character, which he exemplified on several trying occasions.

The only other patron of the Doctor that I shall mention at this time was Sir James Clerk, Bart. of Pennycook. He had made the tour of Europe, resided for a considerable time at Rome, and was universally allowed to be one of the best judges in the fine arts, and of every thing connected with them in Scotland.

These gentlemen showed him the most distinguished marks of civility and regard. Whatever time he could with propriety spare from the necessary duties of his office as a clergyman was principally spent in their company. I readily confess, that when I knew him he was advanced in years. His manner and conversation was then considerably formal, and I am strongly inclined to think that it had always pretty much partaken of that cast. There was, however, at the same time an ingenuous simplicity and candour in the whole of his deportment which much interested every spectator, or those who transacted business with him. It was indicative of the honesty and uprightness of his intentions, and that nothing was more the object of his ambition than to avoid whatever was ambiguous in conduct or behaviour. His appearance in the pulpit was also somewhat stiff and formal. The same observation may be made in regard to his manner when he delivered lectures in the professor's chair.

In 1760 the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland came to the resolution of appointing a deputation of clergymen to visit the Highlands and

Islands, and the places where itinerants and catechists are employed. The visitors named by the Assembly, were Dr. John Hyndman, then of West Kirk, afterwards of Edinburgh, and Dr. Robert Dick of Edinburgh, ministers; but as it was necessary to add a minister who understood the Highland language, it was left to them to choose one or two ministers to go along with them. They accordingly chose Mr. Duncan Macfarlane of Drymen, in Dumbarton presbytery, and Mr. Patrick Simson of Clunie, in Dunkeld presbytery. These gentlemen fulfilled the appointment with fidelity and zeal. The Report was published, and threw great light upon the destitute and melancholy state of those distant regions. It showed the absolute necessity of adopting vigorous measures to introduce the arts of civilized life among the inhabitants, to communicate instruction to the natives, as well as to spread among them the principles of the Christian religion. The attention of the religious world in general was strongly directed to this most interesting and very important subject.

The General Assembly most humanely resolved not to relax their diligence. In 1764, therefore, they appointed Dr. Walker to undertake a mission to the Western Highlands and Islands. His abilities for performing the task were well known throughout the church, and when application was made to him he most readily complied.

In his progress through the Western Highlands and Islands, he made it his business to gain such intelligence, and to make such observations as might be conducive to promote the laudable designs of the church, in instructing the inhabitants of those remote

parts in the right principles of religion and government.

It is impossible within moderate bounds to convey an adequate idea of the excellence of his Report. It affords an admirable specimen of his talents for drawing up a statistical account of a country then very imperfectly known, and how wise a choice the church made in selecting such a man as Dr. Walker for the task.

The very great extent of the parishes in those districts prevents many of the inhabitants from being able to derive any benefit from the ordinary means of instruction. The island of Jura, for example, is twenty-four miles long, and six broad. Through its whole extent it is full of high and impassable mountains. Some of the islands are separated from the rest by dangerous gulfs, and are of difficult access, so that it is not to be expected that religion can subsist in a very prosperous state.

The great disadvantages to which the people of these countries are subjected in acquiring proper instructions in the important principles of religion and government are very pathetically described. Far removed by their distant situation from the more enlightened parts of the kingdom, they are shut out from all intercourse with such of their fellow subjects as are most capable to improve them. The most considerable part of the people are in a great measure excluded from all religious instruction, by the nature of the country, their access to schools and churches being cut off by their remote situation, by dangerous seas, by extensive lochs, rapid rivers, and impassable mountains. When to these things are added, the mistaken principles of their ancestors, all the preju-

dices of an uncivilized state, and the activity and success of the emissaries of the Romish Church, the difficulties are but too evident, to which the poor inhabitants are subjected in acquiring proper notions of religious and civil liberty. These obstacles to the reformation of the Highlands are the more to be regretted, when the nature of the inhabitants is considered, and their ready disposition to receive improvement. To every impartial observer, they must appear an acute and sensible people, extremely desirous of instruction, and capable of great attainments both in knowledge and industry. The ignorance and idleness that too much prevails among them, is by no means their fault, but the misfortune of their situation. Dr. Walker constantly observed, that wherever they had access to schools, to public worship, and to the ordinances of religion, there they were more regular in their morals, more civilized in their manners and in their way of life, more active and industrious than their countrymen who are strangers to these advantages.

It is most readily admitted, that the situation of the Highlands and Islands has been vastly improved within the last threescore years. This has been chiefly effected through the operation of the Royal Bounty for the maintenance of catechists, and the indefatigable exertions of that invaluable establishment, "The Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge." Still, however, there remains a great deal to be done. The abridgment which we have introduced of part of the Doctor's Report cannot fail to be highly interesting to a certain class of readers, not only from the vein of good



sense that pervades the whole, but from the graphical description it contains of the state of the Highlands of Scotland such as they were when Dr. Walker visited them. Besides being curious, it has now become very scarce.

The Report also embraces a variety of strictures upon the uncommon progress of popery in those districts about the middle of the last century. Some improvements are likewise suggested respecting the occupation of catechists, &c. which the Doctor thought deserved attention.

After remaining at Glencross for a good many years, he was translated to Moffat, in the county of Dumfries. Nothing particular happened in his history till 1778. Upon the death of Dr. Ramsay, a report was currently spread through the country that Dr. Walker was to succeed to the chair of Natural History in the University of Edinburgh, and that he was notwithstanding to retain his church living at Moffat. That town being about fifty miles from Edinburgh, some members of the presbytery of Lochmaben (of which the Doctor was a member) thought it inconsistent with the form of church government established in Scotland, that any clergyman should be allowed to absent himself from his parish for half the year, and argued that it was impossible for him to do the duties of his office when removed to such a distance. The General Assembly have now set the question for ever at rest, by determining that non-residence shall not be allowed to any member of the Scottish establishment. But in 1778 no judgment had been given by the church upon the subject. Such a case, it had been supposed, never could

occur. The Doctor was summoned to appear before the presbytery. He seems not to have been at Lochmaben, and did not attend any of the meetings of presbytery for nearly half a year, but sent letters of excuse, expressed in the most respectful terms. At last, in 1779, he received his commission from the Crown, and attended the next ordinary meeting of presbytery. Those who opposed him do not seem to have been very zealous. However, by various means, and after employing a considerable degree of dexterous management, he was allowed to do the duties of both stations for some time, but not without the frequent grumbling both of some of his co-presbyters, and also his parishioners. He therefore must have felt his situation extremely uncomfortable. At last the late Earl of Lauderdale, who was an excellent judge of character and talents, presented him to the church of Colinton, in the immediate vicinity of Edinburgh. Even to accept of this, as the law now stands, would not be permitted, but was not then considered to be incompatible with his parochial functions. His non-residence, when so near Colinton, was esteemed as having the sanction of the church. He had a house in Edinburgh, where he generally lived, at least during the session of the college. It was in the Canongate; for it was natural that he should be inclined to favour that part of the city where he was born, and had spent his early youth.

The delivery of a regular course of lectures on Natural History was, in a certain sense, a novelty in the University of Edinburgh. His immediate predecessor had attempted it but seldom, and from

some cause with which I am unacquainted, had relinquished the task. Most probably this proceeded from want of encouragement, or not being attended by a sufficient number of students. The want of a museum, or at least such as deserved the name, was a capital defect, which could not fail to discourage any man. Principal Robertson, shortly after his appointment to the office of being head of the University, (as we have mentioned in this history), gave in a representation to the patrons upon the subject. They granted a suit of rooms for the accommodation of the class, and also a sum of money to fit them up, but this produced no permanent good effects. Even Dr. Walker himself had to struggle with great difficulties. Nevertheless he still persisted in his labours, and by the additions which he was enabled to make to the museum from his own funds, he in process of time succeeded in giving it a more respectable appearance than it had ever been able to assume before.

The lectures which he delivered had uncommon merit. Besides the great collection of facts they contained, gathered from every quarter within his reach, they were composed with no ordinary taste and elegance of language. The arrangement and illustrations were his own, and he had the address to give a novelty and interest to his discussions which highly pleased his hearers. He did not attempt to invent any new theory. He was of the old school, and did not much respect the ephemeral inventions which many ingenious philosophers have proposed to the world. He was attended by a respectable number of students, and many gentlemen, who could not

otherwise be said to be connected with the University, formed a part of his audience.

When the Royal Society of Edinburgh was formed in 1783, he was one of its earliest members, and took a lively interest in its success.

About the year 1788, he delivered in the college a course of lectures on Agriculture. The celebrated Dr. Cullen had in 1758 read to a number of his friends and favourite pupils nine lectures on the same subject, in which he explained the principles of that art. Dr. Walker's plan was more extensive, and there can be little doubt that it was this that suggested to Sir William Pulteney the idea of founding in the University of Edinburgh a professorship of Agriculture.

In 1797 he furnished to Sir John Sinclair a statistical account of the parish of Colinton, which is drawn up with great skill, and discovers uncommon knowledge of such subjects.

Some time before Dr. Walker died he became blind, apparently from old age. His general health was far from being otherwise bad. Shortly after, he died much respected by a numerous list of friends and acquaintance.

## CHAP. V.

*Alexander Fraser Tytler, Universal History.—Alexander Hamilton, Midwifery.—John Playfair, Mathematics, Natural Philosophy.—Daniel Rutherford, Botany.—James Finlayson, Logic.—Thomas Hardie, Ecclesiastical History.*

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## MR. ALEXANDER FRASER TYTLER.

PROFESSOR JOHN PRINGLE, after having held the chair of universal history for fifteen years, had expressed a wish to have the assistance of a colleague, who might relieve him from the fatigue of teaching the class. Upon the 2d of February 1780, he therefore resigned the chair into the hands of the patrons, who upon the 16th of the same month, re-elected him, and appointed as his colleague, the late Alexander Fraser Tytler, Lord Woodhouselee.

This gentleman was a native of the city of Edinburgh, and was the eldest son of William Tytler of Woodhouselee, Esq. Writer to his Majesty's Signet, well known among the *literati* of Scotland of the last century. He also was born in Edinburgh, and is universally allowed to have been a man of talents of

singular acuteness, well acquainted with the antiquities of his native country, and to have possessed an excellent taste in the fine arts.

In the controversy respecting the unfortunate Mary, he was among the first who made a distinguished figure, and the favourers of the queen triumphantly affirm, that his work has never been satisfactorily answered. Goodall was the person who revived the controversy, by the publication of "An Examination of the Letters said to be written by Mary, Queen of Scots, to James, Earl of Bothwell." This made its appearance in 1754. It contains a great deal of original matter, acute remark, and ingenious reasoning, but it wants arrangement, and the violent party spirit which he possessed, prevented him from weighing the arguments of his opponents with that degree of deliberation and candour, which the subject required. In 1759, Mr. Tytler's "Inquiry into the Evidence against Mary, Queen of Scots," appeared, and though it must be admitted that he made great use of the materials with which Goodall had furnished him; yet the arrangement, and the additional strictures which he has made, together with the respectful manner in which he treats those who entertained different opinions from what he defended, gave him many advantages above all who had espoused the same side of the question. It produced the effect of giving a new direction to the current of popular opinion. He was the author also of several treatises of singular merit.

Young Mr. Tytler had the unspeakable advantage of having his studies conducted under the immediate eye of a father, who not only possessed the capacity, but felt the greatest anxiety of affording him every

opportunity of improvement, which the country could supply. He was sent, therefore, at a very tender age to the High School. After attending this celebrated seminary, he pursued his classical studies in England, at an excellent school at Kensington, kept by the late Mr. Elphinstone. He remained there for three years, and always spoke with great pleasure of the benefit he had derived from it. Upon his return to Scotland, he entered the University of Edinburgh. What particular direction his studies took, cannot be stated with accuracy. From the works which he afterwards published, one is led to conclude, that he was at this time principally occupied in the acquisition of classical knowledge, and in forming his taste upon the admirable models which the ancients have bequeathed to posterity. He had very early laid the foundation of a familiar acquaintance with Greek and Latin; and during the course of a very busy life, he never lost his relish for the works of the eloquent authors who have written in these languages.

He had chosen the law as a profession. It, therefore, became necessary, that by close application and indefatigable study, he should qualify himself for the discharge of the very important but complicated duties of a lawyer. The intimate connection that subsists between the civil or Roman law, and the Scottish law, is known to every one. His attention, therefore, was more particularly directed to the acquisition of a thorough knowledge of those two systems of jurisprudence, being fully persuaded that without a familiar acquaintance with the one, the



other could be only imperfectly understood, or rather that the one was founded upon the other.

I have been able to obtain less information respecting the lectures of Mr. Dick, the professor of civil law, than those of any of his contemporaries. I am much inclined to think, that he did not lecture regularly every session. The number of pupils that attended him were few, it not being necessary to do so, previous to admission to the Society of Writers to the Signet, or to be a member of the Faculty of Advocates.

The sources from which a knowledge of the civil law was to be obtained, were either from the voluminous works of the commentators, or by repairing to some of the universities on the Continent, where that species of learning was much more diligently cultivated than it has been in this island. An accurate and extensive acquaintance with the Justinian code, was esteemed an indispensable qualification, in order to be entitled to the honourable appellation of an able Scottish lawyer. The same degree of labour, however, is not now bestowed upon it by the greater number of the students of the law, probably because it is considered as unnecessary, in order to succeed as a barrister, for which these reasons may be assigned. The statute law has, no doubt, been considerably enlarged; and the immense number of decisions that have been collected and published of late years, which may be styled the common law, though they have not superseded, have certainly rendered a profound knowledge of Roman law less an object of ambition to the mere man of business, how interesting soever a study it must be to the philosophical lawyer.



Regular courses of lectures on general jurisprudence, have never been delivered in Edinburgh, by any of the professors since the first institution of the chair in 1707.\* This must certainly be considered as a capital defect in the education afforded to students of law at the University of Edinburgh. The enlarged views which the study of it could not fail to lay open, would be the means of introducing more liberal ideas among practitioners ; and instead of the profession of the law being considered (as is sometimes the case,) as merely fitted for the display of art and stratagem, it would assume that rank among the liberal professions to which it is so justly entitled.

Mr. Tytler, even at this early period of his life, was fully impressed with the great importance of these studies, and with his accustomed perseverance, devoted much of his time to them. Neither did he neglect the acquisition of general literature. During the whole course of his life, this was a favourite object with him, and what success accompanied his efforts, will afterwards appear.

He passed advocate in the year 1770, and for some years was chiefly occupied in improving himself in the knowledge of his profession. We have already observed, that in consequence of the connections which his father had formed, he possessed an opportunity of being early introduced to the most distinguished literary men in Edinburgh. This was what proved of the greatest benefit to him. Their example stimulated him to prosecute his studies with

\* Vid. vol. ii. p. 60, &c.

increased ardour, and cherished his natural taste for the cultivation of polite literature. Besides being admitted to their learned society, he had advantages of becoming acquainted with the history of Scottish literature and the *litterati* of the last age, above most of his contemporaries ; and we shall soon see what use he made of it.

Among the illustrious characters with whom he associated at this time, was the celebrated Lord Kames. This extraordinary man was now far advanced in life, but still retained all the vivacity of youth, and his ardent thirst for knowledge was unimpaired. He took great delight in the company and conversation of those youths who discovered a passion for literature. He was at the utmost pains to cherish in their minds the love of elegant learning and useful science, and by his example, his instructions, and patronage, accomplished more in the way of bringing forward young men of genius, than any individual of the last century. He was particularly partial to Mr. Tytler, upon whom he conferred very flattering marks of his esteem. The amiable disposition of the young man, whose decided preference to the same or similar studies, in which his Lordship had spent a long life, was early perceived ; and notwithstanding the great inequality of their ages, cemented a friendship, which the stroke of death alone dissolved.

Lord Kames not only communicated to his young friend, what were the subjects which occupied the attention of his very active mind at the time ; but “ admitted him to the freedom of a partner in his studies, and even of an associate in some of his liter-

ary labours."\* Lord Woodhouselee, in these words, alludes to the supplement of two additional volumes, which he added to the Dictionary of Decisions, to whom the task was committed by Lord Kames himself, and carried on under his own eye. These were published in 1778, when the venerable author of the two former volumes, was in his eighty-second year, and Mr. Tytler under thirty. To be associated with such a veteran, who had distinguished himself so remarkably as a lawyer, and as an author of high reputation in the literary world, must have been very flattering to Mr. Tytler, and certainly conveyed an honourable testimony of the opinion entertained of his proficiency in the study of the law. The work was favourably received by the public.

I know not what might have been the state of Mr. Tytler's practice at this time, but he never discontinued the pursuit of general literature, nor the study of what is included under the Belles Lettres. His being appointed professor of universal history in 1780, was very congenial to his wishes, and coincident with the general course of his studies. He entered with ardour upon the discharge of the duties of the office, and revived in the University a taste for such kind of studies, which, through various causes, had been almost entirely neglected. As a proof of his intense application and anxiety to render his lectures as useful as possible to the students, he in the short period of two years, published a plan and outline of his course of lectures. Though this work was originally drawn up, and principally designed to assist those

\* Vid. Preface to Life of Lord Kames.

who attended the course, yet it may be consulted with great profit by every student. He afterwards much enlarged it, and published it under the title of "Elements of General History." I know no work of the size, and on the same subject, which contains nearly so much useful and interesting information, conveyed in an agreeable manner, and remarkable both for perspicuity of style and methodical arrangement.

It would be impossible in this place, to enter upon a critical examination of the various works published by him from time to time. The limits we have prescribed to ourselves, do not admit of it. A list, however, of his writings, is inserted below, which will be found to be more accurate than any heretofore published.\* There is one work, however, which de-

\* Works written by the late Alexander Fraser Tytler, Lord Woodhouselee.

1. Dictionary of Decisions of the Court of Session. Vol. iii. Folio. 1778.

2. Plan and Outlines of a Course of Lectures on Universal History, Ancient and Modern, illustrated with Maps of Ancient and Modern Geography, and a Chronological Table. 1782. Afterwards much enlarged, and published under the title of Elements of General History.

3. Nos. 17. 37. 59. 79. of the Mirror, a periodical work, first published at Edinburgh in 1779 and 1780 ; also, Nos. 7. 19. 24. 44. 63. 70. 79. of the Lounger, first published at Edinburgh in 1785 and 1786.

4. Account of the Life and Writings of Dr. John Gregory, prefixed to a new edition of his works. Published at Edinburgh 1787.

5. History of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, making the First Part of the First Volume of the Transactions of the Royal Society. Printed 1787.

6. Biographical Account of Lord President Dundas, printed in the Second Vol. Transactions of the Royal Society.

7. Account of some Extraordinary Structures on the tops of Hills in the Highlands, with Remarks on the Progress of the Arts among the

serves particular notice. I refer to the *Life of Lord Kames*. It contains a more accurate and full account of the progress of literature and general improvement in Scotland, during the greater part of the eighteenth century, than any work with which I am acquainted.

Mr. Tytler for a considerable number of years discharged the duty of judge-advocate for Scotland with great reputation, and in the year 1800 submitted the result of his experience to the public in an essay on military law, and the practice of courts martial. At last in 1801 he was promoted to the bench, and assumed the title of Lord Woodhouselee. In 1811 he was preferred to be one of the Lords of Justiciary, but he did not live long to enjoy these honours. Though apparently of a healthy constitution, and not far advanced in life, he died upon the 5th of January 1814.

*Ancient Inhabitants of Scotland.* Printed in Second Vol. Transactions of the Royal Society.

8. *Essay on Principles of Translation*, 8vo. Published by Cadell, London. Second edition, with additions. 1797.

9. *Critical Examination of Mr. Whitaker's Course of Hannibal over the Alps.* Published January 1798.

10. *New Edition of Denham's Physico-Theology, with large Notes, and an Account of the Life and Writings of the Author.* Published Jan. 1799.

11. *Ireland Profiting by Example, or the Question, whether Scotland has Gained or Lost by a Union?* fairly discuss. 1799.

12. *Remarks on the Writings and Genius of Allan Ramsay.* Prefixed to a new edition of his works in 1800.

13. *An Essay on Military Law, and the Practice of Courts Martial.* 8vo. Printed 1800.

14. *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Henry Hoimes Lord Kames.* 2 vols. 4to. Published in 1807.

15. *Historical and Critical Essay on the Life and Character of Petrarch.* A great enlargement of the former Essay upon that subject.

Few men have passed so honourably through life as Lord Woodhouselee. From his earliest years he was devoted to the cultivation of elegant learning, and the proficiency to which he attained affords sufficient testimony how diligent a student he must have been. He was one of the most accomplished scholars of the age, possessed a refined taste, and was an elegant critic. As a private gentleman he was esteemed and beloved. In his public capacity he was an honour to the stations which he filled.

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DR. ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

After Dr. Young, the professor of Midwifery, had successfully taught the class for twenty-four years, he found it necessary to procure the assistance of a colleague; he therefore resigned his office upon the 25th of October 1780, and the patrons, upon the subsequent 15th of November, elected him and Dr. Alexander Hamilton conjunct professors of Midwifery.

To the high merits of Dr. Young as a teacher, the present professor of Midwifery has paid a well merited tribute in the following words:—

“ This, (the inversion of the womb), among many other happy consequences, has been the effect of the public instruction of midwives, a measure introduced into Scotland by the late Dr. Young. Before his time, any woman of intrepidity and address who chose to practise midwifery, found employment; and for a while it required all his industry and professional talents to show the folly of trusting the deli-

very of women to such persons. Even they who pretended to the sacred name of philosophers joined in the prejudice. Dame Nature, they said, is the proper midwife, and nobody can be better qualified to attend to her dictates than Dame Ignorance.

“ Dr. Young might with great facility, by publishing a few of the horrible blunders committed by the midwives resident in Edinburgh when he began practice, recorded in his note book, (which is still in existence), have offered many most powerful arguments against such opinions, but he preferred the more philanthropic and dignified method of showing by its effects the utility of his plan. Such has been the public conviction on this subject, that in the present day there is scarcely a parish of Scotland, the midwife of which has not been regularly taught. If the difficulty of instructing women to act as midwives, and Dr. Young’s disinterestedness in that task were universally known, a just tribute to his memory might be paid.”

Dr. Young and Dr. Hamilton, during the life of the former, gave alternately three courses of instruction annually to the male and female pupils till the death of Dr. Young, when the whole duty devolved on Dr. Hamilton. He endeavoured to enlarge upon the plan of his predecessors, by extending the subjects of his lectures so as to give a connected view to the male students of the diseases peculiar to women and children, while he taught with great assiduity the female pupils not only the mode of assisting in ordinary and natural parturition, but also the means of distinguishing early the cases of danger which now and then occur, and of understanding the treat-

ment which such cases require, and consequently of seeing the importance of procuring timely assistance from medical men.

In another respect Dr. Hamilton contributed towards the improvement of Midwifery. He published a work for the use of the profession in general, entitled "Outlines of Midwifery;" from this work he derived great credit, and which has gone through several editions. He published also a Treatise on the Management of Female Complaints, adapted to the use of families, which has been so popular that nine editions have been printed.

Upon the 29th March 1797, it had been resolved by the patrons "that it shall not be in the power of any Professor to appoint another to teach without consent of the Magistrates." Upon application being made to them, he was allowed, on the 25th December 1798, to employ his son, Dr. James Hamilton, jun. as his assistant.

Dr. Hamilton resigned his professorship on the 26th of March 1800, and upon the subsequent 9th of April, his son, the present professor, was unanimously elected sole professor by the patrons.

Dr. Hamilton died upon the 23d May 1802, in the sixty-second year of his age.

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## MR. JOHN PLAYFAIR.

One of the most illustrious philosophers that Scotland ever produced, was the late Mr. John Playfair, who first was Professor of Mathematics, and afterwards of Natural Philosophy, in the University of Edinburgh. He was the eldest son of the Rev. James Playfair, minister of Liff and Benvie, two parishes in Forfarshire, that were united not long after the establishment of the Reformation in this country. He was a man of very considerable abilities, was much respected by all ranks, a very popular preacher, and took the lead in all questions which were agitated in the ecclesiastical courts. His sentiments were decidedly Calvinistic, and he was a strenuous advocate for the doctrines contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith, and the standards of the church of Scotland.

Professor Playfair was born upon the 10th of March 1748. He was educated at the parish school, and his education was carefully superintended at home by his father. He seems to have been early designed for a clergyman; and for this purpose was in his fourteenth year sent to the University of St. Andrews.

He went through the ordinary and regular course at that university, and was uncommonly diligent and assiduous in his studies. Indefatigable application to the business in which his duty called him to be engaged, was through life the leading feature of his

character. What progress he made at college in the languages, or even what figure he made among his class-mates, I have had no means of ascertaining. If I might judge from my own impressions, his talents were at no time of that showy kind, so as to attract general attention. He was slow, but perfectly sure. Whether this proceeded from diffidence, or some other point of character, which it would be idle to attempt to define, I do not pretend to say. His knowledge of what are called the learned languages, was certainly very considerable; but the tendency of his genius (if we are to judge from his pursuits in after life,) led him to cultivate objects very different from the acquisition of languages.

The University of St. Andrews has uniformly maintained a most respectable character, in regard to the cultivation of classical literature; and from the taste and purity of expression, which the writings of Mr. Playfair discover, there can be little doubt that his proficiency was more than ordinary.

Mathematical science appears very early to have attracted his particular attention. This does not seem to have been produced by the eminence of the Professor, or the ardour with which that kind of study was prosecuted at that time at St. Andrews. The bent of his mind was from some cause or other, inclined to the investigation of the science of quantity, and the prosecution of subjects connected with it occupied during the whole course of his life what he chiefly delighted in.

After having attended the literary and philosophical classes, he entered as a member of the New Divinity, or St. Mary's College. This establishment is

solely devoted to theology; and as Mr. Playfair's views were directed to the church, it was necessary that he should attend the divinity hall for the usual number of sessions, and also the lectures on Church History, as well as the class in which the Oriental languages were taught. This he accordingly did, —and having delivered the requisite pieces of trial with approbation, and received ample testimonials from the different professors, he applied to the presbytery for license. From his father's connection and interest, it is probable that application was made to the presbytery of Dundee. He was accordingly licensed; but in what year, I cannot say.

His reputation for proficiency in the mathematics, was rapidly spread among the students at St. Andrews, and his acquaintance with physical science, was universally acknowledged throughout the university. Being conscious of his strength, he determined to improve himself in this study, to which he was now almost exclusively devoted. Being informed in 1766, that a vacancy had taken place in the mathematical chair, Marischal College, Aberdeen, and that the patrons had resolved, that a comparative trial should decide the merit of the candidates that might appear, Mr. Playfair repaired thither. He was then only in his eighteenth year; and it certainly discovered a considerable degree of courage, confidence in his own powers, as well as the progress he had made in mathematics, when he entered the lists as a competitor.

The professorship is in the gift of the town-council, and was founded in the seventeenth century by Dr. Duncan Liddel, a native of the city, who had

studied abroad, and was an eminent proficient in the mathematics. The magistrates had resolved, that the trial should be conducted with the utmost impartiality and fairness. A great many candidates appeared, and the contest excited no ordinary interest in that part of the country. Among names of distinguished note, were Mr. Trail, author of the *Treatise on Algebra*, Dr. Robert Hamilton, afterwards professor of mathematics in the same university, and Mr. Playfair. The trial must have been very formidable; for it lasted eleven days, when Mr. Trail was declared to be the successful candidate. It was certainly no disgrace to Mr. Playfair, then so young a man, to be foiled when engaged with such opponents. It is understood, that the judges bore ample testimony to his abilities, and encouraged him to proceed in the career he had begun.

His academical studies were finished in 1769. At the end of the session, he therefore repaired to his father's hospitable mansion, and having obtained license, he assisted him in preaching, and occasionally also officiated for some of the neighbouring clergy who were his friends.

About this time, the health of Dr. William Wilkie, Professor of Natural Philosophy in the University of St. Andrews, became very precarious. It had at no time been good; and what was a sufficient proof that there was something radically wrong in his constitution, he is represented as having been very whimsical in regard to the state of his health.

This gentleman was a native of Dalmeny, Linlithgowshire, and was born in 1721. He was educated at the University of Edinburgh, and very early dis-

covered marks of distinguished genius. In 1753, he succeeded to the living of Ratho, in the vicinity of Edinburgh. In 1757, he published "The Epigoniad, a poem, in nine books," and in 1759, was elected Professor at St. Andrews.

Dr. Wilkie's infirmities rendered it necessary for him to take the benefit of an assistant to deliver the lectures in the University, and for this purpose he employed Mr. Playfair. He had been the Doctor's pupil. His abilities and qualifications to execute the task well were sufficiently known at St. Andrews. He immediately set about making preparation to discharge his public duty as a lecturer, and this he did with his characteristic ardour. The situation in which he was now placed was doubtless a novel one, but he determined not to slacken his diligence. The subjects that he had to treat of in the course were familiar to his mind, and he only required some time to write them out at length, and to arrange them in that order which was most likely to render them interesting to his juvenile audience. Mr. Playfair could not be said to be a fluent speaker, and indeed he trusted as little as possible to extemporary elocution. His lectures for Dr. Wilkie were exceedingly popular; he was therefore a great favourite with the students.

Dr. Wilkie died at St. Andrews after a lingering illness, 10th October 1772 in the fifty-first year of his age. Mr. Playfair applied for the vacant chair. The United College are the patrons. His claims upon them were certainly very considerable, but they thought that another person was entitled to be preferred, which accordingly took place. It is said, when Mr. P. understood that this gentleman was a

candidate, he voluntarily resigned all pretensions to the office, and added, if he had known how the circumstances of the case stood, he should never have made any application.

In the course of the same year 1772, his father died. Independently of losing so near a relation and so excellent a man, the care of the family now devolved upon Mr. Playfair, who was the eldest son. Lord Gray presented him to the living, but the presentation was disputed by the Crown. This litigation could not fail to give him considerable uneasiness, but at last he obtained complete possession in 1773. He was accordingly ordained, and immediately commenced the discharge of the duties of the parish.

An intimacy appears to have been formed about this time (or perhaps a few years earlier) between Mr. Playfair and the Hon. Lord Robertson, who has preserved part of the correspondence that took place between them. This throws light upon what subjects more particularly occupied his attention at this time. It also shows the ardour of his mind, and how earnestly he engaged in the investigation of philosophical truth. Mathematics and natural philosophy seem principally to have formed the objects of his study during the whole course of his busy life, and these he prosecuted not only with indefatigable industry, but with unprecedented success. In his physical inquiries he always proposed and kept in view some useful purpose as the result.

In 1774 the late celebrated Dr. Maskelyne was engaged in a series of experiments on the effect of mountains in disturbing the direction of the plumb line. He had made a variety of observations in dif-

ferent quarters, and upon very high mountains. At length he determined to visit Schehallien. Whether Mr. Playfair had been ever introduced to the Doctor before, he does not mention. It is probable that his visit proceeded from a pure love of science, and an ardour in pursuing the same kind of studies. Mr. P. found him out, spent a considerable time with him, and assisted him in performing his experiments. Thus was formed, in this distant and mountainous region, an indissoluble friendship, to which both parties ever after looked back with extreme delight. Mr. P. does not appear to have considered the Doctor to be a very profound geometrician, (and indeed this he has expressed in so many words), but he thinks that he stands unrivalled in the neatness of his experiments, the zeal with which they are executed, as well as the amiableness of his temper and manners.

Mr. Playfair was in his thirty-first year before he appeared as an author, so that he cannot be said to have been very forward in thrusting himself upon the notice of the public. This was an "Essay on the Arithmetic of Impossible Quantities," which was published in 1779.

In 1782 he resigned his living, and superintended the education of Mr. Ferguson of Raith, and Sir Ronald Ferguson. How long these gentlemen remained under his care I am not quite certain, but I believe it to have been from five to seven years. Both parties were much pleased with the connection. He was much respected by all the family, and the young pupils, from the first till the day of his death, spoke of him in terms of the most unqualified approbation,

and how much they admired the illustrious talents of their much esteemed preceptor. The truth is, that few men were more fitted to command respect and esteem than Mr. Playfair. Independently of his literary and philosophical acquirements, his prudence and command of temper were very extraordinary. His manners were more polished than generally falls to the lot of one whose habits were so studious and retired.

In a short time he and his pupils visited London. It does not appear that he had ever been in the capital before. He had ample letters of introduction to many celebrated characters. Among others, Principal Robertson had interested himself in his behalf, and Dr. Maskelyne made him acquainted with the leading members of the Royal Society. He was invited to dine with them at their club, and this, he informs us, he did frequently afterwards. His observations upon some individuals of that body, though delivered with modesty and in respectful language, are very curious. They are even given with freedom, and discover an independent tone of thinking which cannot fail to please all candid persons. He seems to have been very much struck with the violent party spirit which Doctors Price, Priestley and others displayed. Nothing comparatively but politics appeared to excite any interest in their minds. Such a ferment had the contest with America raised.

In 1785 he was appointed joint professor of mathematics along with Dr. Adam Ferguson. This was a station he was peculiarly well qualified to fill. The pains he bestowed in instructing the students



was most exemplary. He was himself enthusiastically attached to the cultivation of mathematical science, and whenever any of his pupils showed an inclination for such studies, they received every encouragement from him to exert themselves, and to continue their efforts. Such was the generosity of his nature, that he cherished by every means in his power those whose genius led them in this track. He was always ready to give them the soundest advice as to the conduct of their studies, what books they ought to consult, and, in short, neglected nothing which he thought was calculated to promote the progress of science. But it deserves to be mentioned that this liberal spirit was by no means confined to his own pupils. Genius, in whatever situation it was found, though in the most humble walks of life, was certain of support from him. With a beneficence very peculiar he fostered its growth, and was, in a variety of instances, of the most essential service.

Not long after his appointment to the professorship, he wrote the life of Matthew Stewart, professor of mathematics, formerly mentioned.\* Various reasons may be assigned for this. Dr. Stewart was one of the most profound geometricians of any age or country. Like his great master, Dr. Simson, he was an enthusiastic admirer of the Greek geometry, and made little use comparatively of the modern analysis. Mr. Playfair had also the highest esteem for the works of the ancient mathematicians; but, if the expression may be allowed, he was not so bigotted in

\* Vid. vol. ii. p. 357, &c.

his attachment as the two illustrious philosophers to whom we have now alluded. Professor Stewart had died in January 1785, and the arrangements which were adopted in regard to the mathematical chair took place in the subsequent May. The decease of so eminent a man, whose immediate successor he might almost be called, seems to have awakened his tender sensibilities, and excited a wish to embalm his memory in the recollections of those of his countrymen who survived him, put a high value upon his distinguished genius, and deplored his loss. The task, besides, was not likely to be performed by any other.

In addition to these motives, Mr. Playfair had succeeded Dr. Stewart's son, Mr. Dugald Stewart, of whom some account has been already given.\* He had been long in habits of the most unreserved intimacy with this eminent philosopher. They were nearly about the same age, and mathematical science had early exercised the youthful genius of both. A similarity of pursuits had drawn the bonds of union much tighter. I entertain no doubt that Mr. Stewart was one chief cause of his being introduced to the chair of Mathematics in the University of Edinburgh. It has been noted above, that an intimacy had been formed at an early period between the present Lord Robertson and Mr. Playfair. Now his Lordship and Mr. Stewart had been familiar from infancy. Principal Robertson's house and Dr. Stewart's were within a few yards of one another in the college yard, the children were of the same age, and I have been

\* Vol. 168, &c. of this volume.

assured, when at the High School, were both at Mr. French's class. If this were the case, they must have gone through their college course together. All these circumstances combined could hardly fail to produce a mutual esteem and tenderness, which no length of time could efface. Dr. Robertson on all occasions showed a disposition to serve and patronize Mr. Playfair, and no man had so much in his power in whatever regarded the administration of the business of the University. It need excite no surprise, then, that when Mr. Stewart, Dr. Ferguson, the Principal, and many others concurred in seconding Mr. P.'s wishes, he should have been unanimously elected. These circumstances must also have operated as strong auxiliaries to induce him to write an account of Dr. Stewart.

The next object was an investigation of the causes which affect the accuracy of barometrical measurements. This was followed by a discourse "on the Astronomy of the Brahmins." The Brahminical philosophy had engaged his attention for a very long period, and some of his admirers have expressed a regret that he spent so much of his time upon so unprofitable a subject. The institutions and tenets, both philosophical and religious of that singular class of men, had excited his notice, or rather had roused his curiosity. But it does not appear that much profit is to be derived from such inquiries. The probability is, that they have very little to communicate, and that if their ancestors ever possessed accurate ideas respecting the revolution of the heavenly bodies, these have been so obscured by the hand of time, and the foolish comments of ignorant men, that

it is impossible to separate the chaff from the wheat. The subject, however, is curious.

In the year 1793 his brother James died. He was an architect. His family had no other dependence than the professor, and he discharged the duties of a guardian with an activity and zeal that deserve the highest commendation. His nephew William, now an eminent architect, under whose able superintendence the finishing the college has been carried on, and who is the author of some of the finest designs of buildings in Edinburgh, was, at the death of his father, only six years old.

Mr. Playfair continued to use in his class, in teaching the Elements of Geometry, Simson's Euclid. He had for some time, however, resolved to publish a system of elementary geometry, and to put it into the hands of his pupils. The prolix method of demonstration adopted by Euclid was attended with some disadvantages, and besides, to introduce a few propositions not in Euclid, he thought would be an improvement. Accordingly, in 1795 the "Elements of Geometry" were published. In certain parts of the work, for the sake of brevity, and to render the propositions more memorable, he introduced the use of algebraic symbols, which is the principal novelty it contains.

Mr. Playfair never was a very robust man, but by temperance and the greatest regularity in the use of exercise, &c. his general health was pretty good; but in 1797 he was attacked with rheumatism, which put him to considerable inconvenience. By care and attention, however, he in process of time became convalescent, nevertheless he had learned enough to teach him to be more on his guard than formerly.

In the course of the same year he lost his much valued friend, Dr. James Hutton, a biographical sketch of whom he afterwards drew up in 1803. Dr. Hutton was a very singular character. The unaffected simplicity and kindness of his manners were proverbial among all his friends and acquaintance. He had originally studied medicine, but, it is believed, never attempted to get into practice. Chemistry and general physics were the great objects of his study, and upon some of these subjects his opinions were very peculiar. His assiduity in cultivating geology was most ardent. Upon the institution of the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 1783, Dr. Hutton presented to it a short sketch of a Theory of the Earth, the formation of which had been the great object of his life. This "Theory" being attacked by the celebrated Kirwan, the Doctor thought proper to publish an enlarged and improved edition of it in two volumes, 8vo.

Mr. Playfair, it would appear, had adopted the leading views in Hutton's Theory. Though certainly a very ingenious work, it must be admitted that it is very far from affording a clear exposition of the geological doctrines it contains. Mr. P. therefore published a second edition of the Huttonian Theory, accompanied with such emendations as he judged to be necessary.

Mr. Playfair was promoted from the Mathematical chair to that of Natural Philosophy in 1805. This took place upon the death of Dr. Robison. Upon receiving the appointment, he, during the vacation, retired to Burntisland in Fifeshire to compose his

lectures, thinking that in this solitary situation his studies would receive less interruption.

In 1814 appeared "Outlines of Natural Philosophy;" the two first volumes only were published. In 1815 he wrote the life of Dr. Robison, and in 1816 he composed for the Supplement to the Encyclopædia Britannica a very interesting "Dissertation on the Progress of Mathematical and Physical Science since the Revival of Letters in Europe."

Notwithstanding the very studious life that Professor Playfair led, he found time not only to visit Ireland and examine that wonderful phenomenon called the Giant's Causeway, &c. but he also visited Paris, Switzerland, Italy, &c. He mentions the extreme delight which he derived from visiting Rome, which recalled to his memory so many wonderful events that in times which are past had been transacted within its walls.

Professor Playfair was a member of various literary and scientific societies, and took a very active part in conducting the business of these institutions. As a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, he remarkably distinguished himself by the zeal which he showed in endeavouring to promote its prosperity, and in cultivating those sciences that are more particularly the objects of its attention. The papers that he from time to time communicated, were numerous, comprehended a great variety of different subjects, and were treated with uncommon ability. They certainly constitute one chief ornament which adorns the transactions of that learned body. But he not only contributed himself to increase the treasures they contain-

ed,—he encouraged others to do the same, and was the mean of many gentlemen transmitting communications, which, without being prompted by him, they would never have had the confidence to present to the society.

He may be looked upon as the founder of the Astronomical Institution of Edinburgh. The cultivation of astronomy was at all times a favourite object with him. An observatory had been erected upon the Calton Hill many years before. Ground had been granted by the magistrates for the erection of the building; but as it was private property, and from many other causes, it never turned to any account, and was of very little use to the public. A new institution was projected by Professor Playfair, and other lovers of the science, a building was speedily erected, proper instruments were provided, and an astronomical observer appointed, as well as office-bearers chosen. The subscribers unanimously elected him the first president, and this office he sustained till his death.

For a considerable time before his decease, it was evident to his numerous friends and admirers, that the state of his health was rapidly on the decline. He himself seemed to be quite sensible of this; and with that calmness and composure of mind for which he was so remarkable, was perfectly resigned to the will of the Almighty. He died upon Tuesday, 20th July 1819, in the seventy-first year of his age.

Few men have passed so honourably through life, as Professor Playfair. His talents were of the very first order, and these he had cultivated from his youth with the utmost care. During the course of



a long series of years, he had been with little interruption devoted to scientific pursuits; and almost the whole of that time was spent in the most intense application. His progress in mathematics and natural philosophy, which were the sciences that chiefly engaged his thoughts, was well known both at home and abroad. On the continent, his character as a mathematician and a philosopher, stood as high as it did in this country. With these great qualities, were united the most unassuming manners, which greatly enhanced his value among all good judges.

He was interred in the Calton burying-ground, upon Monday, the 26th of the month. His funeral was what is termed a public one, and was attended by a great concourse of people.

The procession moved from Albany Street, where he lately resided, and was in the following order. The corpse was preceded by a great number of gentlemen who had been his pupils, and the members of the Speculative Society, in fours. This society is connected with the University, and of it the Professor had been a member. The corpse was followed by the magistrates in their official robes, the mace and halberds of their officers covered with crape; the Professors of the University, their officer carrying the mace, covered with crape; the Members of the Royal Medical and Physical Societies; the Astronomical Institution; the Wernerian Natural History Society. A great number of private friends formed the rear. An elegant cenotaph, from a design by his nephew, is erected to his memory within the inclosure of the Observatory on the Calton Hill.



## DR. DANIEL RUTHERFORD.

DR. JOHN HOPE, Professor of Botany, having died at the commencement of the Winter Session of the College, it was necessary, for many reasons, that a Professor of Medicine and Botany should be immediately elected. The Crown is Patron of the Botanical chair, but the sanction of the Town Council has hitherto been reckoned necessary to constitute the Professor a full member of the Medical Faculty, and competent to discharge all the duties of that station. In the course of a very short time, the parties who were the patrons unanimously agreed, and made choice of Dr. Daniel Rutherford, son of Dr. John Rutherford, one of the founders of the Medical School at Edinburgh.\* This took place upon the 15th November, 1786.

Dr. Rutherford was a native of the City of Edinburgh, and was born in December 1749. His father was particularly careful in attending to his education. At a proper age he was sent to the High School, where was laid an excellent foundation of classical learning. Of the figure he made at this seminary I am not informed; but it was then the practice, as it still is, to ground the boys thoroughly in the elements of the language, so that the youth, if they have the inclination and the opportunity, have it in their power to prosecute their studies to the best advantage.

\* Vid. vol. ii. p. 204, &c.

Here he went through the complete regular course, which lasts for six years, and then entered the University. He prosecuted the study of literature with renewed vigour, and his excellence as a classical scholar was universally admitted by his friends and associates. He, at a very early period of life, took great delight in cultivating an acquaintance with authors of that description, and it was the opinion of very competent judges, that had his attention been solely devoted to polite literature, from the specimens he had afforded, he was eminently qualified to make a most distinguished figure.

When he commenced his attendance at the philosophy classes, the study of the mathematics soon attracted his notice, and throughout his whole life, he is understood to have cherished a great partiality for this science. The celebrated Professor who first gave him a taste for such kind of pursuits, was Dr. Matthew Stewart, who delighted to nourish in the juvenile minds of his pupils every appearance of a genius for mathematics. Mr. Rutherford's proficiency is said to have been more than what ordinarily distinguishes the greater number of students at that class. In due time, and in the usual academical course, he attended Mr. Russell's Lectures on Natural Philosophy; he there saw the application which was made of mathematics to the interpretation of the laws of nature. The Newtonian Philosophy was at that time a most popular study, and in general it might be said to be taught very successfully in all the Scottish Universities. Mr. Russell's lectures were exceedingly interesting, and the address with which the experiments he introduced were performed, captivated those who

attended him. Among this number was Mr. Rutherford. I have been assured by those who had the best opportunity of ascertaining the fact, that he had a great taste for mechanics, and that he retained this to the last.

He had been early designed for the medical profession, and therefore the literary and philosophical classes which he had hitherto attended, were only for the purpose of better preparing him for entering upon the study of that science, in the practice of which he was to be engaged for life. The Edinburgh Medical School had already risen into considerable notice. His own father had contributed essentially to its establishment, but after discharging the duties of a Professor for forty years, he about this time retired from office, feeling the infirmities of old age. The second Monro had for a good many years taught Anatomy with great reputation and success. Following up the example shown him by his father, he had inspired the students with a decided conviction of the necessity and importance of being good anatomists, whether they proposed to become physicians or surgeons. Dr. Cullen, after having taught the Chemical Class for a considerable time, had already entered upon his splendid career, which forms a new era in the history of the science of medicine itself. He and Dr. John Gregory alternately taught the Institutes, and the Practice of Physic. Dr. Hope was a very popular teacher of Botany, and Dr. Black, by the discovery of *fixed air*, or carbonic acid gas, certainly rendered the study of Chemistry much more general, and by the interest which his lectures excited, gave a new direction to the inquiries of philosophers,

and particularly of the medical gentlemen of the University of Edinburgh.

After having attended all the medical classes, Mr. Rutherford, in the regular way, applied to the Faculty for the honour of the degree of Doctor of Medicine. He went through with approbation, the private examinations, and, according to custom, he published a Thesis which he was publicly to defend.

The subject of this Thesis is singular, and entitles Dr. Rutherford to rank very high among the chemical philosophers of modern times. Its title is "*De aere Mephitico*," and was dedicated to Andrew Pringle, Lord Alemore, from whom he and his father's family had received various marks of kindness.

It was published upon the 12th September 1772. The Doctor observes, "But healthy and pure air by being respired, not only becomes partly mephitic, but also thence suffers another change in its nature. For after all mephitic air (carbonic acid gas) is separated and removed from it by means of a caustic lixivium, that which remains does not thence become more healthful; for although it makes no precipitate of lime from water, yet it extinguishes fire and life no less than before." This gas is called azote, and also nitrogen by some chemists. Independently of Dr. Black's published experiments, a reference is made to the Doctor's lectures. Mr. Cavendish is also repeatedly quoted. His own experiments, however, form the chief merit of the Thesis. It is universally admitted that Dr. Rutherford first discovered this gas. Dr. Thomson, in his *System of Chemistry*,\* observes, "When Hauxbee passed air through

\* Vid. Vol. I. p. 103.

red-hot metallic tubes, he must have obtained this gas ; but at that time the difference between gases was ascribed to fumes held in solution."

After having so honourably obtained the degree of M.D. the reputation of his discovery being speedily spread through Europe, his character as a chemist of the first eminence was firmly established, and much was augured from a young man in his twenty-second year having distinguished himself so remarkably. Pneumatic chemistry had just started into existence. Dr. Black's discovery of fixed air or carbonic acid gas (which was also first given to the world in a thesis for graduation at the University of Edinburgh) had been made public only nineteen years. A new field as yet unexplored was beginning to open to the view, which since that time has been surveyed with uncommon patience and industry by chemical philosophers. It is no ordinary eulogy upon Dr. Rutherford to be ranked in company with Dr. Black, and to be entitled to the honourable station of being second on the list of those who in the infancy of pneumatic chemistry so essentially promoted our knowledge of gaseous bodies, and gave a new direction to the investigation of the laws of nature.

Having attained the highest honours in the line of his profession, he determined not to relax his diligence in extending his knowledge of medicine. He therefore repaired to Paris on 7th January 1773, where he attended the lectures of the professors of that celebrated medical school. He remained there till 2d September, when he set out for Italy, from whence he returned to London in June 1775, and then to Edinburgh, where he proposed to commence prac-

tising as a physician. His father had an extensive and respectable practice, to which he principally succeeded. Dr. Rutherford's character as a practitioner was much regarded by his brethren, and in general he was esteemed as a judicious physician.

His eldest sister was married to Mr. Walter Scott, writer to the signet, and father of the far-famed Sir Walter Scott, and another to Colonel Russell of Ashiestiel, a castle on the banks of the Tweed, and borders of Etterick forest, which Sir Walter subsequently occupied for some time, and from whence he dates the introductions to the four first Cantos of *Marmion*.

Dr. Rutherford had been in an infirm state of health for a considerable time, and he died suddenly, after breakfast, on 15th December 1819, in the seventieth year of his age.

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DR. JAMES FINLAYSON.

When Mr. Bruce, the Professor of Logic, was engaged as travelling tutor to Lord Melville, it was generally understood that he would resign his office, but he did not do it for some time. It was absolutely necessary, however, that some one should teach the class during Mr. Bruce's absence. The patrons were exceedingly anxious that this should be performed by a man of abilities, and one who was in every respect competent to its duties. They justly considered logic as constituting the best introduction to the successful prosecution of knowledge of every kind, and viewed the class in which the first princi-

ples of philosophy were taught as one of the most important in the University. They fortunately made choice of the late Dr. Finlayson.

James Finlayson, D.D. was born upon the 15th of February 1758, in the parish of Dunblane. His ancestors had resided for many years in that part of the country, and had occupied a small farm called Nether Cambushenie. He was early sent to a school in the neighbourhood, from whence he was in due time removed to the grammar school of Dunblane. The improvement which he made here was very rapid. His uncommon application to his juvenile studies, combined with an understanding naturally clear, and a retentive memory, enabled him to outstrip the greater number of his school-fellows. It would appear that, either from inclination or the wish of his parents, he had been early dedicated to the church, and for this purpose he was sent to the University of Glasgow, in his fourteenth year, and entered upon the preparatory course of study. Here his habits were confirmed, and the very eminent professors who then adorned that celebrated seminary, opened new views to his vigorous and comprehensive mind, and gave him that decided taste for literature and science by which he was through life so remarkably distinguished.

In order to relieve his parents from the expense which necessarily attended his residence at college, in imitation of many young men of genius, he engaged in private teaching. Professor Anderson, who had discovered his talents and steadiness, employed him as an amanuensis; and in 1782, he became domestic tutor to two sons of Sir William Mur-

ray of Ochtertyre. It was this connection that assisted him so essentially in getting forward in life, and to which his great success may in a considerable degree be ascribed. Abilities alone are not sufficient to accomplish this. The aid of favourable circumstances is requisite, in order to exhibit them to advantage.

There were many circumstances which rendered this a desirable situation for Mr. Finlayson. Almost all young men who engage as tutors in Scotland, are connected with the church, and look forward to a settlement, as the ultimate object, in the possession of which all their hopes are to be realized. Now the family of Ochtertyre were well known to have interest sufficient to accomplish this. Sir William was a man of general information, of a liberal turn of thinking, and much pleased with the conversation of an ingenious and intelligent companion. Few persons were better adapted to his taste, than Mr. Finlayson, whose manners were modest and unassuming, and whilst his knowledge was accurate, it was also extensive. Possessed of great natural acuteness, and originality of remark, the ingenuousness of his disposition rendered him to be much esteemed. As his pupils were attending the High School, he had the prospect also of spending the greater part of the year in Edinburgh, from which he laid his account to derive much pleasure and improvement. In addition to all these, his pupils were good scholars, which afforded him (had he required any) a strong incitement to exert his utmost to assist them in the prosecution of their studies. The eldest of them, Sir Patrick, is now a Baron of Exchequer in Scotland,



and the younger, Sir George, is well known as Quarter-Master-General of the army under the Duke of Wellington, and now Secretary of State for the colonies.

When Mr. Finlayson repaired to Edinburgh, he resumed his studies with new vigour. He had also an opportunity of regularly attending the Divinity Hall, and any of the other classes of philosophy he thought proper. About this time, he was admitted a member of the *Theological Society*, which still continues to meet in the college; and I am informed by some of his contemporaries, took a very active part in the discussions that were introduced. It may be proper to observe, that theological questions, or such as are connected with theology, are alone competent to be debated in this society. The members are all students of divinity; and the names of some of the most distinguished ministers of the Church of Scotland are to be found in the list. It does not appear that Mr. Finlayson's talents were of that sort which fit a man for shining as an orator, or making a figure in extemporary harangue. It cannot admit of a doubt, that few of his companions could be compared with him, in regard to the extent of knowledge, or the philosophical precision of language in which he was accustomed to deliver his sentiments. His genius or his taste led him to cultivate accuracy of thought and expression; and if he attained this, he was content. No man saw with greater quickness and clearness of perception, where the strength of an argument lay, or on what side his opponent had laid himself most open to be assailed; but he never indulged much in amplification, or in that diffuseness of illustration by

which orators have produced so wonderful effects. Neither was he a very ready speaker. In short, he seldom attempted to influence the passions, but was satisfied by making his appeal to the reasoning faculty in the most direct terms, depending little upon any aid that might be obtained, by addressing the powers of the imagination. His oratory, then, partook much more of the didactic than the pathetic.

He was licensed to preach the gospel in 1785; and during the course of the same year, he was presented by his Grace, the Duke of Athol, to the church of Dunkeld. This offer, no doubt, he was exceedingly ready to embrace, and would have accepted of, had he not received information from Sir William Murray, that a plan was in agitation to procure for him the Professorship of Logic in the University of Edinburgh. This unexpected proposal gave quite a different direction to his ambition, and he consequently politely declined the favour tendered to him by the Duke.

The negotiation, however, respecting the professorship, did not proceed so smoothly as was supposed. Mr. Bruce had gone abroad, without having given in his resignation, and even before the arrangements were finally made. Mr. Finlayson would never have refused the offer of Dunkeld, had he not laid his account of being appointed professor; but it appears he had done this, although he had no certain information of Mr. Bruce's sentiments upon the subject. He was under no apprehension in regard to the determination of the patrons; because, from the very first, they had expressed their willingness to elect him upon the demission of Mr. Bruce. The history

of the whole transaction is not very well known, but it is generally understood, that Mr. Finlayson accepted of the appointment of being joint professor, under the condition, that Mr. Bruce should be at liberty to resume his duty as professor, whenever he felt inclined ; and this he accordingly did in 1789.

The prospect of being appointed Professor of Logic and Metaphysics had been held out to him for nearly a year. The line of study which he had chiefly prosecuted, eminently qualified him for undertaking the task. The time also previous to the commencement of the Session he employed in the most severe application to the study of those subjects which formed part of the course. Yet notwithstanding these favourable circumstances in his case, Mr. Finlayson's exertions must be admitted to have been the efforts of no ordinary mind ; and when the able manner in which he acquitted himself in his very first course is considered, they claim our admiration.

During the time that the negotiation with Mr. Bruce was pending, he received a presentation to the church of Borthwick, which is about twelve miles south of Edinburgh. This is said to have been procured through the interest of Sir William Murray. The right of patronage is in the gift of the family of Dundas of Arniston. He was quite aware that the footing upon which he stood with Mr. Bruce was too critical to hazard a second time the refusal of so favourable an offer, and therefore he resolved to accept of it. The distance was not so great from Edinburgh as to prevent him from performing the duties of both offices if his colleague declined the duty, and upon the supposition that he did, he possessed

an honourable appointment which was equal to all his wants. He was ordained minister of Borthwick upon the 6th of April 1787.

Notwithstanding the laborious nature of the two offices which he filled, whose duties became much more severe in consequence of his entering upon the discharge of them both about the same time, he determined not to neglect what became him as a parish minister. He entered upon a course of parochial visitation during the summer immediately subsequent to his ordination. It was Principal Robertson that recommended him to an early adoption of this plan, (which had been neglected in the parish for thirty years) as being much calculated to increase his usefulness, and give him an opportunity of being better acquainted with those whom he addressed from the pulpit.

Abilities such as he possessed could not be long concealed. The stations which he occupied were public, and in addition to his own qualifications, the connection he had formed with the Arniston family, and consequently with the late Lord Melville, opened to him prospects which ultimately were fully realized. His talents for business had been perceived and justly appreciated by that admirable judge of character. It was therefore determined that he should be speedily removed to Edinburgh, where his practical talents would be of essential service in assisting to support that system of ecclesiastical politics which his Lordship had long espoused, and that had directed for many years the decisions of the General Assembly. In 1790 he was presented by the Magistrates of Edinburgh to Lady Yester's Church. Upon the death of Dr. Robertson

in 1793, he succeeded that great man in the collegiate church of the Old Greyfriars, and on a vacancy taking place, he was removed to the High Church in 1799. This is generally esteemed the most honourable appointment that can be conferred upon any minister of a church which is founded upon the broad basis of presbyterian parity. Here he became colleague to the celebrated Dr. Blair, whose funeral sermon he was called upon to preach in little more than a year after. The University of Edinburgh conferred upon him the degree of D.D., and in 1802 he was chosen Moderator to the General Assembly.

Dr. Finlayson had now obtained every honourable preferment which, as a clergyman of the Church of Scotland, he could obtain in the line of his profession, and with the possession of these he was perfectly satisfied, because he had the agreeable reflection that every step in his advancement had been procured by means which all good men would approve of. His influence in the church was now greatly extended, and nothing of any importance was transacted in the ecclesiastical courts without his advice or direction. Among his own party his sway was unlimited, and even those who differed from him respecting the propriety of some of his measures, frankly acknowledged the openness with which he avowed his principles of church government, though they considered some of them as harsh, and carried to an unnecessary extreme.

Whilst Dr. Finlayson thus lived respected by the public, beloved by his friends, and saw his reputation daily extending, the seeds of some internal disease had been sown which were soon to cut him off in his

career of usefulness, and blast the fond expectations of his numerous admirers, who looked forward to the enjoyment of his society to a much more protracted period.

Towards the beginning of 1805 the first symptoms of disease began to appear, but the prognostics were far from being so well defined as to lead to any conjecture respecting the cause. He removed to the country and spent the greater part of autumn with his brother. His health was so far restored as to be able to perform the duties of the class during that winter, but in the course of 1807 he became considerably worse. Yet in consequence of the good effects that resulted from a tour he took accompanied by some of his friends, he still flattered himself that he could undergo the fatigue of teaching, and not only opened the class, but continued giving lectures for about a fortnight. It was obvious to every one of his hearers that the exertion was too great for him. He was therefore prevailed upon to accept of assistance, which was most cheerfully given by one of his earliest friends and colleagues, Principal Baird, who taught the class for that season.

The disease increased very rapidly in the month of January 1808, and on the 25th, while conversing with Dr. Baird, he was seized with a paralytic affection, which deprived him of the faculty of speech and the power of moving that side where the chief seat of the pain lay. The first intelligible sentence that he uttered after this was in the highest degree impressive, and contained the strongest possible proof of the serenity and composure of his mind, as well as of the thorough conviction he had of the truth of

those principles which he had professed and taught. "I am about," said he, "to pass to a better habitation, where all who believe in Jesus shall enter." These emphatic words were pronounced when he considered his dissolution very near at hand, and afford one other proof of the comfort with which Christianity inspires the mind, and the consolation which it administers in the most trying situations conceivable by man, even when about to encounter the king of terrors. He died on the 28th of January 1808.

Dr. Finlayson was rather below the middle size. His appearance indicated nothing which was calculated to impress a stranger when first introduced to him. His manner was somewhat formal, and to those who did not know him, assumed the appearance of distance or shyness. I am strongly inclined to think that he was naturally shy or reserved. Whether this proceeded from the original constitution of his mind, or was the effect of acquired habits, or of part of both, I cannot affirm. Vain, forward, and loquacious men are, with a very few exceptions, (I except Cicero,) neither men of real information, nor do they stand in that awe of the company with which they may be associated, so as to preserve their good opinion, or acquit themselves to the best advantage. One thing is certain, that Dr. Finlayson was at all times sententious. The constitution of his mind, and the cultivation he had bestowed upon it, naturally led him to investigate the means by which truth was to be attained. This was the object which he kept constantly in his view. His conversation, his lectures, his discourses from the pulpit, and his speeches in public courts, all partook of the same na-

ture. He never wavered from the point which he was anxious to establish. He saw his way, and he did not hesitate to pursue it.

The means by which he raised himself to be the leader of his party was quite different from that of any of his predecessors who had directed the national ecclesiastical court for so many years. Oratory was indispensably necessary to all those who presumed to take a part in the debates with the view of distinguishing themselves in conducting the business of the Assembly. Dr. Finlayson was well aware of the nature of his talents; he therefore never attempted this; but the manner which he took of being useful to the church, and of establishing his influence to an unprecedented degree, was what I may be allowed to call acting as *chamber counsel*. He had made the ecclesiastical constitution of Scotland the subject of his most particular study, and upon every question of any importance he was generally consulted, and great weight was annexed to his opinion.

The volume of sermons published by his executors, though not selected by himself, conveys a sufficiently correct idea of his style of preaching, and is remarkable for perspicuity of expression and a fund of good sense. His lectures were held in high estimation by all who attended the course. In his private character he was every thing which commanded respect and esteem, and among his associates he was almost adored. The students who attended his class presented to the University a portrait of him as a testimony of the respect they entertained for his memory.

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Upon the death of Professor Wallace, Mr. David Hume was elected Professor of Scots law. This took place on the 6th of December 1786. Mr. Hume, during his professorship, published two volumes, 4to. on the Criminal Law of Scotland, which are justly held to be authority on that important branch of jurisprudence. He resigned his professorship in 1822, on being appointed one of the Barons of Exchequer for Scotland.

In 1786 also, a new professorship was founded by the Crown, for the purpose of teaching Practical Astronomy, of which the late Dr. Robert Blair was appointed first professor—but who never lectured.

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DR. THOMAS HARDIE.

The professorship of Church History might be considered a sinecure from the time that Mr. Robert Cumming succeeded his father in 1762, till the appointment of Dr. Thomas Hardie on the 30th of July 1788. This important branch of theological education was in a great measure neglected for nearly thirty years in the University, not from any carelessness on the part of the students, but from being deprived of any opportunity of attending lectures on the subject.

I have been able to procure very little information respecting the early part of Dr. Hardie's history. He was son of the Rev. Henry Hardie, one of the ministers of Culross. From the intimacy that subsisted between him and the celebrated Rev. John Logan of Leith and Dr. Thomas Robertson of Dal-

meny, it is probable that he was educated at the University of Edinburgh. He was first presented to the church of Ballingray in Fifeshire, and on the 25th of November 1784 was admitted one of the ministers of Edinburgh. Here his reputation as a preacher spread very rapidly, but in consequence of the infirm state of his health he felt preaching in the High Church too much for him on account of its size. With the concurrence therefore of the patrons, he was translated to the New North Church, which did not require equal exertion.

As soon as it was known that he was to deliver a course of lectures on Ecclesiastical History, great expectations were formed concerning them—and the public were not disappointed. He excited a spirit among the students which had never been known before, and his class became one of the best attended in the University. His lectures might rather be called the Philosophy of Ecclesiastical History. He took a broad view of his subject, and expressed himself in a bold and independent style upon whatever subject he had occasion to introduce or to discuss. The tone of his mind was naturally manly, and he had the faculty of transfusing this into his manner of delivery both in the chair and the pulpit. That this contributed much to his excessive popularity as a lecturer cannot be called in question, because during the session immediately subsequent to his death, at the request of the students, Dr. Moodie attempted to read the lectures, but in his hands they had lost that *unction* with which they were accompanied when read by the author. It cannot be denied that generally speaking, an author is most likely to read his

own work better than a stranger whose kind of oratory, habits of thinking, and style of composition, are very different from his own. Dr. Moodie was justly esteemed as an eloquent preacher, but in regard to *manner* it was as different from Dr. Hardie's as could well be imagined. This was doubtless the chief cause of the failure.

None of these lectures were ever published, which has often surprised me. He certainly had intended them for publication at some future period, because he regularly intimated, at the commencement of the session, that no notes were allowed to be taken in consequence of the abuse which had been sometimes made of them in this University. The ignorance of those who opposed Christianity in the first ages of the Christian church, especially if they manifested a dogmatic spirit, was exposed and held up in a very striking light. The folly and vices of the clergy, if under the mask of superior sanctity they actually set at defiance the immutable maxims of truth and righteousness, were lashed with an unsparing hand, and on such occasions no man could employ a more refined satire than Dr. Hardie. Sometimes his representations were irresistibly ludicrous, and what added greatly to the effect, he himself uniformly preserved the most rigid graveness of manner.

Dr. Hardie published a considerable number of single sermons of acknowledged merit. They have never been collected into one volume. As a preacher he was distinguished for good sense, and the clear and luminous view he took of his subject. His lectures from the pulpit were much admired. Shortly after his admission to Edinburgh, he expounded the

whole of the Gospel according to John, which attracted very general attention. An Edinburgh bookseller offered him a very considerable sum of money for the manuscript ; but it is said, upon the proposal being made to him, it was found that the lectures had never been written out, but had been delivered from short notes.

The disaffected state in which a great many in this country were at the breaking out of the French revolution is well known, and had not the measures of government been vigorous, it is incalculable what dreadful consequences might have ensued. The confidential servants of the Crown in this part of the country considered it as a matter of the utmost importance that these dangerous principles should be opposed from the press. Application was made to Dr. Hardie, who readily consented, and he published, but without his name, a pamphlet called "The Patriot." It is very well written, and produced a considerable effect at the time.

He was elected moderator of the General Assembly in 1793, and before its dissolution delivered a very eloquent address to the members.

Dr. Hardie's state of health was at no time good. His constitution seems to have had a strong tendency to consumption. He therefore early felt the symptoms of premature old age. This prevented him from exerting himself as he wished. He died upon the 21st of November 1798, to the unspeakable loss of his rising family, and regretted by a numerous class of friends and admirers, who respected him as a man of talents, and an independent honest man.

## CHAP. VI.

*Andrew Duncan, Institutes of Medicine.—William Moodie, Oriental Languages.—Alexander Christison, Humanity.—Alexander Murray, Oriental Languages.—Thomas Brown, Moral Philosophy.*

ANDREW DUNCAN, M. D. was, at the time of his death, as has been already mentioned, one of the oldest, if not the very oldest lecturer on Medicine in Europe.\* His zeal in the prosecution of medical science was never surpassed, and his numerous attempts to be of service to his fellow creatures, as well as to his brethren, deserved the most unbounded praise.

He was born at St. Andrews on 17th October 1744. He was educated at that University, for which seminary he retained a great partiality, probably on account of its recalling to his recollection the agreeable days which he spent there in his youth, and the many pleasant associations which time never obliterated from his memory.

He appears to have made choice of medicine very early in life. The sole object of his ambition, therefore, was to improve every opportunity that was afforded him, to render himself properly qualified

\* I was present at his introductory lecture in 1817, and he then stated, that it was his forty-ninth course.

for the discharge of that very important but difficult profession. His persevering industry and ardour in the pursuit of medical knowledge was very remarkable. He therefore determined to repair to Edinburgh, the capital of Scotland, and attend the medical classes there. As a medical school, it had only begun to emerge from obscurity. The first Monro, who may be styled its founder, had indeed retired, and for some time had not performed the duties of the office, but he had a son who succeeded him that was equally ardent in the prosecution of anatomy. Dr. Whytt had died, but Dr. Cullen had entered upon his labours, and commenced that immortal career by which he was entitled to be considered as one of the most illustrious physicians of ancient or of modern times.

The zeal of the students kept pace with that of the professors; they were equally eager in the pursuit of medical science, and every theory relating to the healing art which was advanced by the professors was canvassed with the most unlimited freedom. Any novelty in the practice of physic was subjected to a similar rigorous scrutiny. The greatest bustle and activity prevailed throughout the whole medical community of Edinburgh. This was said to have originated with, or at least to have been chiefly owing to Cullen, who had infused a new spirit into the minds of his pupils. It is allowed by the admirers of this great man, that he was perhaps too fond of theory. This was a natural accompaniment of the genius he possessed. Of a bold and enterprising temper, he was not to be staggered by difficulties, and his motto might have been "*Aut inveniam aut faciam.*" His

turn for speculation was very great, and from his frank, free manner in his intercourse with the students, he had the address to make them generally a party in whatever cause he espoused. About this time, also, medical societies were becoming much in vogue, and at last a society of gentlemen in Edinburgh obtained a royal charter, conferring upon them various privileges, under the name of "the Royal Medical Society." Dr. Cullen laid the foundation stone of the hall which this society erected for the transaction of their ordinary business.

No one entered with greater fervour into the multifarious discussions of the students than Dr. Duncan. Of an open and generous disposition, he was universally beloved, and he took a very active part in conducting the business of the various societies of which he was a member, particularly that of the Royal Medical Society, of which he was several times the president, and latterly the treasurer for many years, and the building of the Hall for which, was suggested, and chiefly managed by him. In testimony of their sense of his services, a gold medal was voted to him, and a full length portrait of him, at the expense of the Society, is placed in their hall. His medical studies suffered no interruption ; on the contrary, they were prosecuted with renewed vigour, and the stock of knowledge he had acquired in the line of his profession was now very ample. In the years 1768-9, Dr. Duncan went a voyage to China as surgeon to the East India Company's ship *Asia*, under the command of Mr., afterwards Sir Robert Preston. His services were so highly esteemed in that capacity, that the Captain offered him £500 to go out with

him a second time, which the Doctor declined, as his views were directed to practice at home.

In October 1769, he graduated at the University of St. Andrews. His Thesis was on "*De Alvi purgantium natura et usu*;" and in May following he was admitted a licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians in Edinburgh.

How soon he had formed the resolution of commencing a private lecturer is not known, but he seems to have been early determined to hazard the attempt, which he made very soon after his return from India in 1769. To have projected such a plan discovered no ordinary degree of enterprize, and besides, in a great measure, it had the merit of originality. The medical school in Edinburgh was not of very long standing; its reputation, though doubtless on the increase, was comparatively confined within narrow limits. It was not to be expected, therefore, that there was the same scope for a private lecturer which now exists. The novelty of the adventure might attract some, but there were difficulties to be encountered that would have intimidated the most of young men. A professor in a University acts under the patronage of the established authorities. This has not only a natural tendency to communicate confidence to every one who has to address a public assembly, but it very often produces a sensible effect upon the manner in which the doctrines are taught. One who has no assistance of this kind, and sees that he has nothing to depend upon but his own exertions, feels that he must proceed with greater caution, and that he labours under disadvantages with which the other has not to contend.



Dr. Duncan, aware of all these circumstances, acted accordingly. His expectations were not too sanguine, and he was determined not to allow ordinary difficulties to produce such an effect upon him as to make him abandon the plan he had proposed. He well knew that perseverance is the only virtue which is rewarded in this world. He therefore resolved that this should not be wanting, while no exertion should be spared to render the lectures as worthy of attention as possible.

He seems to have early declined the art of surgery, and to have directed the whole bent of his attention to medical practice as a physician. Those two branches of the profession are perfectly distinct, and marked by very broad lines of difference. It is natural to suppose, then, that the subjects upon which he prelected would embrace those to which he was most partial and had most studied. This he did accordingly.

At this time, in 1770, the situation of Professor of Medicine in the University of St. Andrews having become vacant by the death of Dr. Thomas Simson, brother of the celebrated mathematician Dr. Robert Simson of Glasgow, Dr. Duncan resolved to stand candidate for the vacant chair, on which occasion he produced most powerful testimonials from the Medical Faculty of the University of Edinburgh, and from other eminent members of the profession. He was notwithstanding unsuccessful—a superior interest having prevailed in favour of another.

Meanwhile, as he was as yet *sine nomine*, he wisely resolved to communicate to the world the substance

of what he taught in his lectures, and what he esteemed to be the best medical practice. The title of this performance is "Elements of Therapeutics," which was first published in 1770. The prevention and the curing of diseases constitute the grand objects of the science of Medicine, and when these ends are accomplished, every thing is effected which lies within its power. The maladies to which mankind are liable are extremely numerous, as well as of very different kinds. On account of the intimate connection which Medicine has with the interests of mankind, and its general importance to society, it has in every stage of civilization been a favourite object to possess as many remedies as possible to be applied as the circumstances of the case may direct. In the most rude societies attempts have been made to generalize the stock of knowledge, and in the most civilized, the aim of all medical philosophers has been the same. Therapeutics, therefore, or the art of curing diseases, has excited astonishing interest among mankind in every age, and must continue to do so as long as human nature remains as it is at present, exposed to sickness and death. Dr. Duncan's Elements of Therapeutics exhibit a very sensible and judicious view of the subjects treated of. It is reasonable to expect that during the space of nearly sixty years many improvements, or at least alterations, have been introduced into the practice, but it is only justice to remark, that the work to which we now refer contains an impartial statement of what was held in those days to be the best practice. It is in every respect worthy of the candour and discernment of the author.

In 1772 he published a short discourse on the use of mercury. There is no article in the whole *Materia Medica* which is a more powerful agent, and the peculiar efficacy of its applications in certain cases renders it an object of very considerable importance in the estimation of every medical practitioner. But in proportion as it is a useful and active agent in pharmacy, in the same proportion in the hands of a rash or unskilful person it becomes hazardous to employ it with too much freedom. The melancholy and even fatal effects that have ensued from too precipitate use of mercurial preparations are well known to every physician. Dr. Duncan's observations upon these subjects show that he had investigated the matter with care, and the cautions he gives are deserving of the highest regard.

Dr. Duncan continued to deliver his usual course of lectures to a respectable number of students, which from year to year were gradually on the increase. The young gentlemen felt it their interest to do so from the great variety of information and useful practical knowledge they contained.

He was married in February 1771 to Miss Elizabeth Knox, daughter of Mr. John Knox, surgeon in the service of the East India Company, by whom he had a family of twelve children.

The circumstances that accompanied the appointment of Dr. James Gregory to teach the Institutes of Medicine have been already mentioned.\* Dr. Home had taught the class for two sessions, and

\* Vid. p. 198, &c. of this volume.

upon the 6th of September 1775, Dr. Duncan was appointed to perform a similar duty for the ensuing session. Upon the supposition of Dr. Drummond's finally declining to accept of the professorship, Dr. Duncan was a candidate for the vacant chair, but did not succeed at this time. In consequence of this transaction Dr. Duncan published "an Address to the Students of Medicine in the University," dated November 1776, in which he stated his intention to continue his lectures out of the college, and which then produced a considerable impression.

In the same year 1776 appeared "Heads of Lectures on the Theory and Practice of Medicine." Various editions of this work were afterwards published, and were favourably received. The students who attended the lectures must have derived the most essential benefit from such a publication. It presented a Syllabus of what was taught, and besides other advantages, it could not fail to bring to their remembrance many important facts and illustrations which might otherwise have escaped them. It also affords an additional proof that the doctor was gaining strength, and that notwithstanding his late disappointment his popularity was advancing.

In his lectures he comprehended both the theory and the practice, which, in Edinburgh, and some other Universities are appropriated to two separate professorships. The origin of this arrangement it would be perhaps difficult to assign, unless the extent of the subject be admitted as a sufficient reason. In lecturing it is very difficult, if not almost impos-

sible to separate the one from the other. And if the business be divided there is the greatest hazard that different theories, as well as methods of practice will be adopted by the professors, which must rather disconcert than benefit the student. Several editions of this treatise have been published besides that of 1776, particularly those of 1790 and 1801. In 1809 the first part was sent to the press, but under a title somewhat different,—Heads of Lectures on the Institutions of Medicine.

In 1776 Dr. Duncan had the honour and merit of founding a new Institution in Edinburgh, which was much needed, and has been of the most essential benefit to thousands: This was the Edinburgh Dispensary. The spirit of benevolence by which it was dictated deserves the highest commendation. Something similar, no doubt, existed in London and other great cities, but there was nothing of the kind in Scotland, till it was introduced by the Doctor.

The Edinburgh Infirmary had been founded by the celebrated Provost George Drummond about forty years before, and besides operating as a most benevolent and useful charity to the patients who make application, it affords an admirable opportunity of instruction to the youth who have made medicine their profession. The essential and solid advantages to be derived from attending the wards of an hospital are incalculable. There is no other way by which medical skill can be so readily and so successfully obtained. The variety of cases that are to be seen there—the convenience of having it in one's power to observe the different stages of the disease, together with witnessing the practice of experienced

physicians, and hearing their critical remarks, must also be taken into account.

But there is a certain class of diseases not to be found in an hospital, because from the constitution of such establishments, persons afflicted with them are not admitted. Such diseases have been termed *chronical*. They are of long continuance, or lingering in their nature. Patients of this description are opposed to those who are seized with acute diseases, and have an equal claim upon our sympathy or compassion, and are often in a very helpless state. What renders them frequently more objects of pity is the little prospect they have of any relief being afforded to them. Unfortunately a great number of our fellow creatures are in this situation, whom it is our duty not to abandon to hopeless despair as absolutely incurable. By the use of means a proper cure may be effected, or at least their condition rendered more tolerable, and what was formerly the residence of pure, unmingled sadness turned into joy. The efforts of nature are often wonderful, and while there is the smallest ground for hope we ought not to give place to despair. It was for the relief of such unhappy sufferers that the Edinburgh Dispensary was established.

The labour and indefatigable exertion that were necessary exceed all belief. The plan, as has been already mentioned, originated with the Doctor himself. After drawing up a prospectus, and circulating it among his friends, he ventured to address the public upon the subject. He had secured the approbation of a few who gave him every encouragement to proceed, but it was a more

difficult task to interest the public in general. No one could disapprove of the principles of what he proposed, nor of the manner he had taken to diffuse a knowledge of it among his fellow citizens. Generous, however, as the public undoubtedly are, it often requires some time as well as address before their feelings are sufficiently excited. The scheme could not be carried into effect without funds, and the Doctor alone was responsible for any sum that it might be necessary to advance. At the distance of half a century he had the unspeakable gratification of having seen his labours crowned with success—upwards of 200,000 patients have derived benefit from this institution. It is only justice to add, that a numerous band of his medical friends and associates have, during that time, proffered their voluntary services without fee or reward, and thus have steadily contributed their labours to the support of so admirable an institution.

At this charity the distressed poor are provided with the best advice, and proper medicines, if necessary, gratis. At a set time in the week attendance is given at the Hall of the Dispensary for this purpose. It may be mentioned that many years ago a hall was erected in West Richmond Street, with every suitable accommodation, where all the business connected with the establishment is transacted with the utmost regularity. In it there is a portrait of Dr. Duncan, the founder of the Institution, painted for the Dispensary by the late Sir Henry Raeburn. In short Dr. Duncan has an unquestionable claim upon the gratitude of his countrymen, by being the founder of the Edinburgh Dispensary, and by

his own individual exertions achieving an enterprise which few would have attempted. By this establishment also a chasm in the Edinburgh school for medical education was filled up.

The doctor who was passionately zealous in promoting whatever appeared to serve the cause of medical science, projected in 1773, a new work entitled "Medical Commentaries." This work was published annually under that title until 1793,—under a different title, namely, "Annals of Medicine," it was published annually from 1796 to 1804; so that for no less than thirty-one years, this periodical collection made its appearance.

He seems to have been impressed with the idea that something of the kind was wanted in the medical world. There was certainly no work, in any respect similar, published at that time in Great Britain. Various attempts have been made since to conduct medical periodical works upon the same principles, but, in general, they have miscarried, and been very short lived. The plan was very comprehensive. It included whatever related to medical science in the most extensive application of the terms, the existing state of which, in the different countries of the globe, he was particularly careful to record. If any new discoveries were made, these were ascribed to their proper authors. All the circumstances connected with the discovery, and especially how it bore or was likely to bear on medicine, were faithfully described. If any new method of practice was introduced or proposed, a full account was given of its nature, and in what respect it was calculated to serve the purpose intended, or, in other words,



a candid appreciation of its value was submitted to the reader. It also contained original communications on medical science, and was intended as a repository of discussion upon all these subjects. Interesting historical facts respecting the former state and practice of medicine were also admitted, as well as biographical memoirs of eminent surgeons or physicians. Promotions in the medical staff, together with an obituary of distinguished medical characters were not neglected. Such medical publications as appeared worthy of notice were reviewed with candour, and a faithful account given of their contents. In short, nothing was excluded which, in the most remote degree, referred either to surgery or medicine, and it might be considered as comprising a fair history of what took place in the medical world during the year. Its continuance for so long a period is a sufficient testimony, were any necessary, in what degree of esteem it was held by the public.

In 1780 Dr. Duncan published an account of the life and writings of Dr. Monro, primus. Dr. Duncan had a great veneration for Monro's memory, and was desirous of holding him up to young students as an example in every respect worthy of imitation.

Dr. Cullen, through old age and extreme debility, resigned his professorship of the Practice of Physic, upon the 30th December 1789, and Dr. Gregory, who had resigned the Theory of Medicine, was elected his colleague. Upon the same day Dr. Duncan was chosen Dr. Gregory's successor, the duties of which office he most faithfully discharged till within

a few years of his death. Dr. Alison was appointed his assistant and successor.

In 1807 Dr. Duncan, who had directed his attention with his characteristic benevolence to the improvements that had taken place in England and elsewhere in the treatment of insane persons, brought before the public a plan for the erection and support of a lunatic asylum on an improved system. He had many difficulties to encounter in obtaining subscriptions, which came in slowly, but at last was successful in procuring the erection of an establishment under a Royal charter at Morningside, near Edinburgh, where every advantage which the improvements of medical science can suggest is secured to the patients.

In 1808, the Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council of Edinburgh, presented him with the freedom of the city, in testimony of the sense they entertained of the services he had rendered to the community by the establishment of the Public Dispensary and Lunatic Asylum.

Dr. Duncan had always been attached to horticulture as a source of amusement, and had a garden in the neighbourhood to which he had paid much attention. Being thus led to form the opinion that horticulture might be carried to a much higher degree of improvement, to the advantage of the country at large, he projected and succeeded in establishing the Caledonian Horticultural Society, now incorporated by Royal charter, which, by exciting a spirit of emulation among practical gardeners, has been productive of the best effects.

Afterwards, in order to afford the most efficient means of improvement in this department, he pro-

posed and procured the establishment of a public experimental garden, for the purpose of putting to the test, various modes of horticulture, and collecting and naturalizing foreign fruits and vegetables. He had the satisfaction of living to witness the practical execution of the plan, which promises to continue to be attended with the best results. On the death of Dr. James Gregory in 1821, Dr. Duncan was appointed first Physician to his Majesty for Scotland.

Dr. Duncan was the author of several small works on subjects connected with his profession, which it is unnecessary to specify here. They all exhibit the same benevolence of disposition, and the unwearied ardour with which he cultivated the science of medicine.

Dr. Duncan showed much paternal kindness to students from a distance, in respect of advice and hospitality; when sick he attended them gratis, and when they fell victims to disease he opened his family burying-ground for their remains. Some had the privilege of being boarders in his family, among these was a singular character from Switzerland, Baron Constant, who has since been conspicuous by the part he took in various events of the French Revolution, as a member of its successive legislative bodies. As one of the Tribunate, he boldly resisted the erection of an arbitrary court proposed by the Chief Consul. He is still actively engaged in Paris, as a speaker in the House of Legislature, and a writer in the political journals. Contemporaries with Baron Constant in the Speculative Society of Edinburgh were several individuals since distinguished in public life. Mr. Charles Hope, now Lord President of the Court of Session; Mr., now Sir

James Mackintosh, then a medical student. Mr. Malcolm Laing, advocate; Mr. Josiah Walker, Professor in Glasgow; Sir James Hall, Bart.; Mr. Henry Beaufoy, M. P., and Mr. Thomas Addis Emmett, then a medical student of much promise, afterwards at the Irish Bar, and at last so deeply implicated in the rebellion in Ireland in 1798.

The Doctor arrived at a time of life which extended much longer than ordinarily falls to the lot of mortals. To the last he was cheerful and contented, and though in the decline of life, enjoyed the unspeakable satisfaction of possessing the esteem and respect of a numerous circle, who were sensible of his good qualities and revered his virtues. He was confined to the house only for two months before his death, which took place on the 5th July 1828, when he was in the 84th year of his age.

His funeral was attended by the Magistrates and Town Council of Edinburgh, the Senatus Academicus, the Royal College of Physicians, the managers and medical practitioners of the Royal Public Dispensary, the Royal Medical and Physical Societies, the Caledonian Horticultural Society, and a large assemblage of private gentlemen, friends of the deceased.

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The late Sir William Pulteney, who had been educated at the University, and passed advocate at the Scottish bar in 1751, with the permission of the patrons founded a professorship of Agriculture, upon the condition that the right of nominating the professor should in all time coming reside in his family. Dr. Andrew Coventry was appointed upon the 22d of December 1790.

Upon the death of Principal Robertson, Dr.

George Baird, the Professor of Hebrew, was appointed to the Principality on the 3d of July 1793, and resigned his professorship accordingly.

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DR. WILLIAM MOODIE.

William Moodie, D. D., was elected to the vacant chair of Hebrew in 1793, and about two years afterwards, besides the Hebrew, he was appointed to teach *other Oriental languages*.

This gentleman's father had been minister first at Gartly, in the Presbytery of Strathbogie, and was afterwards translated to Monymead, in the county of Fife. Whether he was educated at St. Andrews or at Edinburgh, or partly at both, I am uncertain. He was first presented to the church of Kirkaldy, and in 1785 was translated to Edinburgh. He was much esteemed as a preacher, and a posthumous volume of his sermons has been published.

He was an excellent Professor, and showed the greatest anxiety to encourage a taste for oriental literature. Dr. Moodie taught a Persic class privately, and ever since, that language has been taught by the Professor. The following testimony to Dr. Moodie's abilities is given by Dr. David Scot of Corstorphine, who is unquestionably one of the most accomplished oriental scholars in this country. "To the merits of an excellent preacher, Dr. Moodie added those of an elegant scholar. He was skilled in Hebrew and Chaldaic, as his office required, and his knowledge in Persic was extensive, and his pronunciation correct. His pupils will long remember the accomplishments of the gentleman, and the kindness of the friend. The author of this dissertation will not soon forget his ge-

nerous attention and encouragement, while he studied Persic under him."\*—His constitution was very delicate, and after being confined for a considerable time he died upon the 11th of June 1812.

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MR. ALEXANDER CHRISTISON.

Alexander Christison, A. M. was, in 1806, elected Professor of Humanity upon the death of Dr. John Hill.

This gentleman affords one of the most striking instances to be found in the records of literary history, of what may be effected by one who possesses talents, when united to the most indefatigable application to study, and prompted to exert those talents by the most honourable and virtuous motives. His parents occupied an humble station in life, but they lived to see their oldest and favourite son advanced to a rank in society which they never could have expected, and enjoying the friendship and esteem of the most learned and distinguished characters of the age.

Mr. Christison was born in the year 1753 at Redpath, an obscure spot in the parish of Longformacus, Berwickshire, the whole of which is very sequestered and far removed from the busy haunts of men. It is hilly, and chiefly parcelled out into sheep farms. As he was at a considerable distance from the parish school, he was taught to read by his parents, whose income being but slender, and having a pretty numerous family, they could ill afford to spend much on

\* Vid. Observations on the propriety and usefulness of an establishment in Edinburgh for teaching Oriental Languages, for civil and commercial purposes, to young gentlemen going to India, p. 43, &c.

the education of their son. His progress under the domestic tuition of his mother, in particular, was very rapid, and when sent to the parochial school to be taught writing and arithmetic, a scene to him entirely new presented itself. It is well known that the elements of the Latin language are taught in all the parish schools of Scotland. His ardent and aspiring temper, and what may be termed an instinctive thirst after knowledge, prompted him anxiously to desire an acquaintance with a language in whose study he saw some of his school-fellows engaged, but of which he was entirely ignorant. This seems to have first given a stimulus to his ambition, and to have called forth or excited those latent sparks of genius of which he himself was as yet unconscious, but that were afterwards displayed as his opportunities of improvement increased.

The difficulties he had to encounter at this period of his life were such as would have dispirited most boys, and caused them to desist entirely from an attempt that seemed so hopeless and surrounded on all hands by obstacles which appeared to be so insurmountable. The energy of his character was such, however, that he determined to proceed, and in the most undaunted manner grapple with those obstructions which lay in the way of the accomplishment of his favourite object.

His residence at school was only of short duration, the *res angusta domi* put it out of the power of the father to gratify his son's, or his own inclinations. Young Christison, therefore, at a very tender age was taken from school, and sent to tend the flocks of a neighbouring farmer. He was now removed to a con-

siderable distance from every person who could render him the least assistance in his studies ; and any opportunities which he enjoyed of consulting such benevolent individuals were merely casual, and recurred at distant intervals. His occupation, however, gave him the most complete command of his time, which he improved to the best advantage. The foundation that had been laid at school was very slender ; his education necessarily scanty ; he had hardly any director of his studies ; few books, and those frequently ill chosen ; none to encourage him to perseverance when his resolution became languid, or to cherish that emulation to arrive at excellence which constitutes the characteristic feature of the mind of every man of true genius.

He had to struggle for years with these and many other discouraging circumstances connected with his situation, but from the natural clearness of his understanding, and possessing the blessing of a most retentive memory, whatever hint or instruction he received from any judicious or friendly monitor was carefully treasured up and acted upon, so that of him it might emphatically be said *nulla retrorsum*, whatever accession he had once made to his stock of knowledge was never neglected by him through carelessness, or allowed to remain unemployed.

Having laboured for a long period in this solitary and obscure condition, he at length became possessed of such attainments as attracted the notice of some of his neighbours, who advised him to become a schoolmaster. This corresponded with his own inclinations, and presented, as he conceived, the only opening by which he could rescue himself from the



disagreeable situation in which he felt himself placed. The parochial school of Auldambus falling vacant about the same time, he made application for it, and principally through the recommendation of his parish minister, it is said, he obtained it.

I have not been able to learn how long he continued in this situation; it was probably only for a very short time. But he afterwards, in consequence of the talents which he discovered, and the assiduity and zeal for the improvement of his scholars at Auldambus, obtained the appointment of parish schoolmaster of Edrom. In regard to emolument it was only a little superior, but in several other respects it was more advantageous to Mr. Christison, in consequence of the objects which, in the course of his literary progress, he now imagined to be within his reach. He was more in the view of the public, the sphere in which he acted was more extended, and feeling greater confidence in his own powers, and in the degree of cultivation that he had bestowed upon them, he determined to repair to Edinburgh, and enter himself a member of the University.

This took place some time about the year 1775; but the precise year of his entrance upon an academical course cannot be accurately ascertained. He had not been long at the University till, in consequence of the superiority of his proficiency in classical learning, he drew the attention of his fellow students, and by the unaffected manner and discretion with which he conducted himself, interested others in his behalf who could serve him more essentially. He was therefore, upon a vacancy, preferred to be one of the teachers of George Watson's Hospital in

Edinburgh. This, to say the least of it, was a most respectable appointment, and afforded him an opportunity of exerting his talents upon a much more extensive scale than in any situation he had ever held; besides the governors, who are persons of the most respectable character, had now the power of ascertaining both his abilities as a teacher, and the praise which was due to him from the success which his plans had upon the progress of his pupils.

His diligence and assiduity in this public station very soon became generally known in Edinburgh; when a vacancy therefore occurred in the grammar school of Dalkeith, such were the testimonials which he produced, that they secured the votes of those who had the appointment. This took place in 1781. His friend, the late Dr. Henry Greive, then minister of Dalkeith, afterwards of Edinburgh, whose judgment no one who knew him will be disposed to dispute, had an active share in bringing about this arrangement.

The grammar school of Dalkeith had, for upwards of a century, maintained a distinguished reputation, as being one of the best seminaries in Scotland for acquiring a knowledge of classical learning. Under Mr. Christison's superintendence, however, this was greatly augmented, notwithstanding that some of the best scholars of the last age had held the same situation. In 1785 therefore, upon the resignation of Mr. James French as one of the masters of the High School, in consequence of the infirmities of old age, the Magistrates, who are the patrons, unanimously made choice of Mr. Christison to be his successor. He discharged for more than twenty years the duties of this very

public station with uncommon fidelity and address; and it was the result of a small publication of his upon the subject, that a new arrangement took place in the school by introducing the practice of teaching the boys the elements of the Greek language during the course of the fourth year, or earlier, as circumstances might render necessary.

It is only justice to the memory of Dr. Adam, the celebrated Rector of the High School, that shortly after his appointment to the office in 1768 a similar proposal was made by him, but it was not to extend beyond his own class, and to be taught at a separate hour three days in the week. On the other two days, and without any additional fee, both ancient and modern geography were proposed to be taught. The worthy Doctor considered this as an exceedingly happy thought, and so doubtless it was. Both proposals when first made met with the most formidable opposition, but after astonishing perseverance, in process of time this was withdrawn. Mr. Christison's plan was an extension of that of the Doctor's, and he certainly deserves the gratitude of the community for having carried it into effect.

Upon the death of Dr. Hill, Mr. C. was elected his successor in 1806, as has been already mentioned. The mode of choosing the Professor of Humanity is different from that of any other professor in the University. The election is made by six delegates,\* who unanimously agreed to prefer Mr. Christison. It does not appear that any other candidate had started, but it is certain that Dr. Adam was considerably disappointed that it was not offered to him, after having

\* This was formerly mentioned. Vid. vol. ii. p. 339.

faithfully served the citizens of Edinburgh nearly forty years.\*

Mr. C. did not either in the first or second class deliver any formal set of lectures on general criticism, or on Roman antiquities. This had been the practice of his predecessors. But his plan embraced a much wider range. Whatever occurred in the course of reading in the class, whether it regarded the language or the sentiment, he illustrated in a very miscellaneous way, calling in to his aid the writings of the most celebrated critics, poets and philosophers, ancient and modern. He also made frequent allusions to the sciences and even to the arts, all of which he occasionally laid under contribution, and ingeniously pointed out to the students what reference they bore to the passage to which their attention might happen to be directed. His general knowledge, whether literary or scientific, was prodigiously extensive, and from the unaffected but interesting manner in which he expatiated upon almost every topic, he could not fail to be of the most essential benefit to his youthful hearers. He generally made use of short notes, but he trusted entirely to extempore elocution in clothing his ideas in language.

From his uncommon modesty and diffidence Mr. Christison published very little, though often urged by his friends to be more liberal of his stores. Of late years he appears to have cherished a decided partiality for the mathematical and physical sciences. On the former of these subjects he, a short time before his death, which took place on the 25th of

\* The Doctor himself in conversation mentioned this to the author.

June 1820, published a paper in Dr. Thomson's *Annals of Philosophy*. He never permitted, however, any subject whatever to interfere with the business of his class. He prepared himself upon the passage which was to occupy their attention as carefully as if it had never before been the subject of his meditation, and would permit no one to intrude upon him during the hours which were appropriated to this purpose, so conscientious was he in the discharge of those duties which were intrusted to him.

He died at Edinburgh on the 25th June 1820, in the 68th year of his age.

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DR. ALEXANDER MURRAY.

Upon the death of Dr. Moodie in 1812, Dr. Alexander Murray was appointed Professor of Hebrew and Oriental Languages.

The history of the life of Dr. Murray is very remarkable. He was one of those men, who, notwithstanding that they had the most formidable difficulties to encounter in early life, at last succeeded in overcoming them, and established their reputation upon the most solid basis.

He was born in the parish of Kells and shire of Kirkcudbright, on the 22d of October 1775, and his parents were in a very humble walk in life. Robert Murray, his father, was a shepherd. He is represented as having discharged the duties of that station with the utmost fidelity and zeal, and to have always maintained among his employers the character of a trusty servant. He was twice married, and had a pretty numerous family. The Doctor was an only

son by the second marriage, and at his birth his father was in the sixty-ninth year of his age.

From his infancy, he seems to have naturally possessed an ardent thirst after knowledge. He was taught the letters of the alphabet at home, and in due time was able to read English. The ordinary way in which the children of the Scottish peasantry in remote parts of the country are instructed in the art of reading, is the Westminster Shorter Catechism, to which in Scotland is generally prefixed the alphabet, is put into their hands. After having mastered this, they are advanced to read the Bible. In towns, and even in villages, a different course is no doubt adopted; but in retired and sequestered places, at a distance from public schools, this is the plan most commonly followed. Dr. Murray has given the following very characteristic account of his initiation into the art of reading.\*

“Some time in Autumn 1781, my father bought a catechism for me, and began to teach me the alphabet. As it was too good a book for me to handle at all times, it was generally locked up, and he, throughout the winter, drew the figures of the letters to me in his *written* hand on the board of an old *wool-card*, with the black end of an extinguished heather stem or root, snatched from the fire. I soon learned all the alphabet in this form, and became *writer* as well as *reader*. I wrought with the *board* and *brand* continually. Then the catechism was present-

\* The Doctor, at the request of the Rev. J. G. Maitland, minister of Minigaff, has given a most distinct history of himself from his birth till 1794, when he first arrived in Edinburgh, to attend the University. It is written with great simplicity and openness of character.

ed ; and in a month or two I could read the easier parts of it. I daily amused myself with copying as above, the *printed* letters. In May 1782, he gave me a small psalm-book, for which I totally abandoned the catechism, which I did not like, and which I tore into two pieces, and concealed in a hole of a dike. I soon got many psalms by memory, and longed for a new book. Here difficulties rose. The Bible, *used every night* in the family, I was not permitted to open or touch. The rest of the books were put up in chests. I at length got a New Testament, and read the historical parts with great curiosity and ardour. But I longed to read the Bible, which seemed to me a much more pleasant book, and I actually went to where I knew an old loose leaved Bible lay, and carried it away in piecemeal. I perfectly remember the strange pleasure I felt in reading the history of Abraham and of David. I liked mournful narratives, and greatly admired Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Lamentations. I pored on these pieces of the Bible in secret for many months; for I durst not show them openly, and as I read constantly, and remembered well, I soon astonished all our honest neighbours with the large passages of Scripture I repeated before them. I have forgot too much of my biblical *knowledge* ; but I can still rehearse all the names of the Patriarchs, from Adam to Christ, and various other narratives, seldom committed to memory."

There is certainly a vast difference in the capacity of children to acquire the elements of learning. A great deal, it is readily admitted, depends on the teacher ; but nevertheless, it is universally believed,



that there is a radical disparity in the original constitution of the individuals of the human species. Some, whose opportunities of improvement have been very slender, have distinguished themselves by the use they have made of them, while others who had the most ample advantages, have never attained to mediocrity. These observations are naturally suggested by contemplating the difficulties with which Dr. Murray had to contend. He might be said to be self-taught,—the assistance he received was so trifling. When he had once acquired the mere elements of reading, his youthful, but ardent mind, was excited to exertion, and he appears to have devoured (if we may so use the phrase,) with inexpressible delight, the few books he occasionally met with, or that came within his reach. His pursuits were directed according to no regular plan. The seasons for making progress were entirely casual, having no one who either had the ability or inclination to give him advice, or afford him help. Had he been aware of his forlorn situation, it could hardly have been expected that he would have continued his efforts. The difficulties he had to encounter must have chilled his ardour. But such was his instinctive ambition to be a man of learning, that he formed the resolution not to be baffled. The discouragements by which he was surrounded, only seem to have roused his energies, and to have stimulated him to greater perseverance, in order to overcome them. The history of literature and learned men, furnishes many examples from which it might be proved, that scholars of the most firm and steady character would sometimes despair, could their thirst of knowledge be repressed by



ordinary difficulties. Many of them have had to struggle with severe poverty, or the cold neglect of those who had it in their power to encourage them in their studies, and could have easily done so, without putting themselves to very great trouble or expense.

All his brothers had been bred shepherds ; and it was his father's intention that the Doctor should follow the same profession ; but he was often reproached as being a bad and negligent *herd-boy*. The truth is, he was little suited for the occupation,—he was a weakly child, and besides was near-sighted, which was the cause of his frequently committing blunders. His habits were sedentary, and given to reading. This was remarked by the neighbours, so that in a short time his fame was spread through the whole *glen*. His father's poverty, however, was an insuperable barrier against his being sent to school. In harvest 1783, his mother's brother returned from England, having, as a travelling merchant, acquired some little money, and hearing of his *genius*, undertook to place him next Spring at the school of New-Galloway. Thither he repaired on the 26th of May 1784. Here he remained only about six months, being obliged to leave school through indisposition, and upon his recovery, instead of being sent back to school, he was made to assist, as a shepherd-boy, the rest of the family. In this course of life, he continued for three years.

About this time, he got the loan of Salmon's Geographical Grammar. He says himself, that he derived *immense* benefit from this book. It was the production of one of the most voluminous authors of

the last century. The work long maintained its popularity ; but its character had begun to fade, and it was considered as far inferior, both in the accuracy and the extent of the information it contained, to many more modern publications. But it deserves to be mentioned, as curious in itself, and exhibiting to view, upon how apparently trifling causes, very important events frequently depend, that it was reading Salmon's Grammar which gave him a decided taste for philology. His own words are, that he " often admired and mused on the specimens of the Lord's Prayer in every language, found in Salmon's Grammar." This was the occasion of his becoming very desirous of being better acquainted with these different languages, and which, with unparalleled industry and success, he afterwards, in a great measure, accomplished.

How strongly his genius led him to these kinds of studies, is proved by another circumstance in his history. An old woman showed him her psalm-book ; he discovered the Hebrew alphabet marked letter after letter, in the 119th Psalm. He took a copy of these letters, by printing them off in his old way, and kept them. They were afterwards of the most essential service to him.

As he could now read and write, he was at different times engaged in teaching the children of families in the country ; but as they resided at a very considerable distance from each other, he found it necessary to remain six weeks at a time in each family. His father in 1790, removed to herd on a farm within two miles of the village of Minigaff. The Doctor, therefore, now regularly attended school,

and seizing greedily every opportunity of improvement that offered, after various very singular occurrences, which he himself has minutely stated, he got a smattering of French, Latin, and Greek. His indefatigable diligence was unprecedented, and deserves to be held up as an example worthy of being imitated by all young students. In process of time, his knowledge of the languages, we have just now mentioned, was greatly increased.

The minute account which he has given of his progress is very interesting, and will be read with uncommon delight by all who are fond of literary biography. It would be very unsuitable to insert the whole in this place, by reason of its length; but as it was his being professor of Oriental Languages in the University of Edinburgh, that is the occasion of his being introduced into this history, I cannot resist the temptation of giving his own narrative of the circumstances that accompanied his acquaintance with Hebrew.

“ I had long possessed the Hebrew letters, and knew the meanings of many words. I was now determined to learn that language. I sent for a Hebrew grammar to Edinburgh, by the man who rode post.\* He brought me Robertson’s Grammar, and the first edition of that book, which contains the Arabic alphabet in the last leaf. Mr. Cramond,† to whom I showed it, in September 1791, at the time when I received it, informed me, that he was once able to read Hebrew, but that he had now forgotten it entirely. I had for a long time known the alphabet ;

\* Between Wigton and Edinburgh.      † Schoolmaster of Minigaff.

I found the Latin easy and intelligible ; I soon mastered the *points*, and in the course of a month, got into the whole system of Jewish grammar. On an accidental visit to New Galloway, I was told by John Heron, a cousin of mine, and father to Robert Heron, author of several works, that he could give me a small old Lexicon, belonging to his son. This present was to me astonishingly agreeable. It contained besides the words and their Latin interpretations, the book of Ruth in the original. When I came home, some person informed me that a relation of Mr. Wilson's in Auchinleck, then living in Minigaff village, had in her possession a Hebrew Bible, the property of her brother, Mr. William Wilson, a dissenting clergyman in Ireland. She consented to let me have the use of it for several months. It was a small edition in several volumes, I forget from which press. I made good use of this loan ; I read it throughout, and many passages and books of it, a number of times."

The Doctor appears to have been quite aware of the desultory manner in which from necessity his studies were conducted, yet he was of opinion, that had he been placed under a more formal and accurate master, he should not have been able to make respectable progress. He never had it in his power to attend school regularly. When obliged to be absent, it was his notion, that he would have been begun anew in the rudiments and grammar.

About this time he got the loan of Bailie's English Dictionary, from which he obtained the *Anglo-Saxon* Alphabet, the Anglo-Saxon Paternoster. This put it in his power to peruse Hicke's Saxon Grammar,

after he went to Edinburgh, and paved the way to the Visi-Gothic and German. He got possession in 1792 of a small Welsh History of Christ and the Apostles. Though destitute of a translation, he carefully compared the quotations from Scripture, that were cited, and thus got acquainted with many Welsh words and sentences.\* It was his opinion, that if he had a copy of the Bible in any language of which he knew the alphabet, he could make considerable progress in learning it without grammar or dictionary. He got the loan of a volume of the Ancient Universal History. It contained an account of the *Abyssinians*, &c., and also a copy of their alphabet, which he transcribed for future use.

After various events, unnecessary to be particularly specified, he arrived in Edinburgh in the beginning of November 1794. The circumstances which brought about this important event in his life were the following :—A Mr. M'Harg happened to be in Edinburgh, and mentioned some incidents in Dr. Murray's history to Mr. James Kinnear, a printer, who, from the most benevolent motives observed, that if he could be brought to town, Dr. Baird and several other gentlemen might be induced to patronise him. Dr. M. took an early opportunity of com-

\* The late Dr. Thomas Brown, Professor of Moral Philosophy in this University adopted a similar plan. "In commencing the study of a new language, he scarcely at first paid any attention to the grammar, but proceeded at once to peruse some work that was familiar to him. His first step was generally to procure a New Testament in the language he was to study, and then he immediately began with the Gospel by St. John. A similar method, he mentioned to me, was pursued by his friends Leyden and Murray, two of the most eminent linguists that our country has produced." Life of Dr. Brown by the Rev. David Welsh, p. 462.

municating this to the Rev. Mr. Maitland, minister of Minigaff, who, though not personally known to Dr. Baird, gave him a letter of introduction to the Principal. Mr. Kinnear had related to the Rev. James Porteous, chaplain to the Royal Infirmary, Dr. Murray's singular history. This gentleman informed the late excellent Dr. Andrew Hunter, Professor of Divinity, who with a generosity very characteristic, offered to assist with money, that he might be enabled to attend the University. What effect this produced, we are not informed. He was, shortly after, examined by Dr. Baird, Dr. Finlayson, and Dr. Moodie. He read *ad aperturam libri*, a passage from a French author, an ode of Horace, a page of Homer, and a Hebrew psalm. Having acquitted himself to their satisfaction upon all those pieces of trial, they agreed to recommend him as a free scholar, that is, that he should be admitted to the University without paying the usual fees to the different professors.

Such acquirements in so young a lad who was fourteen before he could be said to have been sent to any regular school, cannot fail to excite astonishment. Those who had now begun to patronise him, had both the inclination and the power essentially to serve him. Through their exertions he received a college bursary in January 1797. Those petty pensions are in Edinburgh very trifling. What was the amount of the one he received we have not learned, but it was to be paid quarterly, and to continue for four years. To a person of his habits, it might have been called a kingdom without a very violent figure of speech. The patronage he received in other re-

spects was of the most essential advantage. His own qualifications were, in every sense of the word, entitled to be considered as extraordinary. He appears very soon to have commenced that of a private teacher, and to have laboured in that vocation with unabated zeal and activity. The ordinary qualifications that are in greatest request, consist of a knowledge of Greek and Latin, and this is generally demanded for young gentlemen who are attending the schools or the University.

The ordinary way by which young men of slender fortune are enabled to support themselves at the University is either by private teaching, or contributing to some periodical work, or lastly engaging in some work which perhaps may not improperly be described as not of a fugitive nature. Dr. Murray had recourse to all these, and by unexampled diligence and unwearied assiduity in process of time, succeeded in acquiring a moderate competence during the period of his studies at College. In a short time his talents were recognised by those who were very competent to appreciate them, and who took every opportunity of patronising him, and bringing into view his literary qualifications. How soon he attracted the notice of the celebrated Dr. John Leyden is not distinctly known, but it seems probable, that it was soon after he arrived in Edinburgh. Their talent for the acquisition of languages bore a great resemblance, and both had been early devoted to philological pursuits. They were nearly of the same age, but Leyden had entered the University six or seven years before him. They soon became intimate companions, and their mutual esteem suffered

no diminution, till the death of Dr. Leyden, which took place in the island of Java in the year 1811. Dr. Murray survived him about two years, so that it may be said, that the lives of these two illustrious men were speedily and prematurely closed.

Dr. Murray had entered the University with the express design of becoming in due time a clergyman of the established Church of Scotland. It is well known, that before any one can be enrolled as a student of divinity, he must regularly have gone through a course of philosophy, besides having attended the literary classes, which are particularly pointed out by the laws of the church. This he accordingly did, and at the commencement of the session began his theological studies.

Dr. Leyden had for some years been editor of the Scots Magazine, and by his means Dr. Murray was introduced to Mr. Constable, the proprietor of that periodical publication. It is said that he had occasionally contributed of his stores shortly after his coming to Edinburgh. Some of these were in prose, and others in verse, for he was early a writer of verses. The Magazine for January 1802, is understood to have been a conjunct concern, but that the seven subsequent numbers were edited exclusively by Dr. M. It was in this work, that the life of Mr. Bruce of Kinnaird, the celebrated traveller, first appeared. This was enlarged afterwards, and prefixed to an edition of that author's travels. About the same time he wrote several articles in the Edinburgh Review, which are allowed to possess uncommon merit.

Dr. Leyden had been consulted by the booksellers in regard to a new edition of Bruce's travels. He



repaired to Kinnaird, and in a letter addressed to the late Mr. Manners gave a candid opinion what improvements, he judged, might be introduced into the projected publication. Dr. Leyden, however, shortly after went out to India. Dr. Murray was the only other person in this country who was considered to be qualified for the performance of the task. When he undertook to be the editor, he resolved to exert himself to the utmost, that it might be honourable to the memory of Mr. Bruce, and not discreditable to himself. He resided for about ten months at Kinnaird, and examined with care the extensive and very curious collection of papers, manuscripts, and drawings. This was a situation peculiarly suited to his taste, for he thus had an opportunity of indulging his passion for the study of oriental literature, than which nothing could be more gratifying. The discretion and skill that he showed have received the approbation of all good judges. Mr. Bruce had proposed to publish a second edition, and had actually prepared a copy for the press for this purpose. The corrections which the author had made were most religiously observed. The notes which are subjoined, and the great fund of additional information not only derived from Mr. Bruce's manuscripts, but from the store of oriental learning which Dr. Murray possessed, added greatly to its value. It was published in 1805, and its sale was so successful, that a third edition was called for, which appeared in 1813, a few months before the Doctor's death.

Though Dr. Murray had been engaged in the most intense application to his philological studies,

yet it must not be supposed, that they engrossed his attention so exclusively as to prevent him from prosecuting, with eagerness, those objects which were more nearly allied to the character he sustained as a preacher of the gospel. After having proceeded regularly step by step, he became a licentiate of the church, for the whole course of his pursuits, particularly after he came to Edinburgh, had been conducted with the design of ultimately being a minister in the national establishment. But whether it was occasioned by his modesty and diffidence, or being intent upon other objects that withdrew his ambition from diligently employing the usual means by which the favour of patrons is obtained, he had been licensed several years before he was known as having superintended the second edition of Bruce's Travels. It is unnecessary to remark, that the history of mankind affords many similar instances of ingenious and learned men being neglected by the rich and the powerful, while persons of far inferior accomplishments are patronised and caressed by them.

Dr. Murray did obtain a living in the church, and the circumstances which attended the appointment were very agreeable to his feelings. Mr. Douglas of Orchardton had been his pupil, and was well aware of his abilities and worth, and was much disposed to serve him. Having heard that Dr. Muirhead, the aged minister of Urr, wished for an assistant and successor, Dr. Murray immediately occurred to him as a very fit person to perform the duties of that station. The whole transaction was conducted with great prudence, the parishioners being pleased with Dr. Murray's public appearances in the pulpit

as an acceptable preacher, the matter was settled in a manner agreeable to all parties. He was accordingly ordained assistant and successor to Dr. Muirhead in December 1806. He found his situation accompanied with as much comfort as this imperfect state could be expected to afford. He was on all occasions treated with the utmost kindness by Dr. Muirhead and his family. The aged doctor was for some time able to take part in the public services of the Sabbath, but this was of short continuance. The infirmities of old age rapidly increased, and he died upon the 16th of May 1808.

Dr. Murray did not reside in the manse of Urr while Dr. Muirhead lived, but lodged with a relation of his own in the neighbourhood. Some time after his death, however, he removed thither, and having now a comfortable residence, upon the 9th of December 1808, he married Miss Henrietta Affleck, an amiable young lady to whom he had formed an attachment. This connection was attended with the happiest effects during the few years that they lived together.

Dr. Murray was most attentive to the discharge of all the pastoral duties of his office, and was conscientious in paying the most minute regard to its various details. His parishioners were quite sensible of this, and he therefore gave entire satisfaction to all orders of the community. He had no idea of attempting to render Christian doctrine palatable either to the rich or the poor, the great or the small, by frittering down the great truths it reveals. So that the words of the Apostle (1st Thess. ii. 4.) might be applied to him. "But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust

with the Gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men but God who trieth our hearts."

The public service on Sundays was only a small part of the pastoral duty that Dr. Murray performed. He therefore immediately set about undertaking what is commonly known by the name of ministerial visitation. This consists of visiting, personally, the parishioners at their own houses. In former times the minister was constantly accompanied with an elder in the discharge of this part of his duty, who was called the elder of the district. In some parts of the country he is so still, when the parish is divided into certain portions, and to each elder is assigned one, which commonly is in his own immediate vicinity. This gives him an opportunity of being better acquainted with their habits and principles than he could be supposed to be, did he live at a distance, or in a remote part of the parish. The elder also is appointed a superintendence over his district, so that he may not improperly be looked upon as the clergyman's deputy, and as acting under his authority. In the early establishment of the church of Scotland, this office was looked upon as of great importance, and in the standards of the church minute directions are given how it ought to be executed, and by what means its duties ought to be fulfilled.

The beneficial consequences that ensue from ministerial visitation when engaged in from proper principles, and with the commendable desire of doing good, are manifold. The members of the congregation are pleased to see their pastor's attention to the discharge of his duty, it contributes to cement their

mutual regard, and to draw the bonds of union closer. He becomes better acquainted with those under his charge, and sees them at their own homes, when he is afforded opportunities of making observations upon various subjects, which he could have nowhere else. Upon such occasions he generally delivers an exhortation addressed to those who are present, which the fitness of the time and place seems naturally to suggest, when all the members of the household are assembled together. The topics then insisted on are such as appear to be most suitable to, and to arise from, the particular circumstances of the family. He can thus accommodate his remarks, and practically apply them according as he conceives it to be most prudent, necessary, or suitable to their situation,—“a word spoken in season how good is it.” Whether their lot has been prosperous or adverse, has been mixed with joy or sorrow, he can speak home to their case, and all are aware of the good that may be done in this way, and what an extensive sphere of usefulness thus presents itself to him whose principles lead him to make the proper improvement. The service is concluded with prayer.

“Dr. Murray” (we are told) “during the course of every year was accustomed to catechise the individuals in every district of the parish.” No method is more adapted to promote the knowledge of religion, than the institution of catechetical exercises. These were observed by the Doctor as often as circumstances required. Sometimes meetings of this kind were periodically held in the church, at other times certain places were fixed upon, and intimation

publicly made from the pulpit when they were to assemble.

The most of protestant churches have published catechisms, to be used on these, as well as on other occasions, and experience has proved, that the method by question and answer, is one of the most speedy and effectual means of conveying instruction, that can be devised. The person to whom the question is put, is in a manner compelled to exercise his faculties; and the repetition of the proposition which is implied in the answer, assists in fixing it more indelibly upon the mind. The Westminster Assembly, which met in 1638, have published two systems of this kind, called the Larger and the Shorter Catechisms. They both contain an exposition of that system of divine truth, which is contained in the Confession of Faith, composed by the same Assembly, all of which were adopted by the church of Scotland. The Shorter Catechism is taught in the parish schools of Scotland, and the children are required to get it by heart. The Larger is intended for the instruction of those who are farther advanced in knowledge. They will, however, bear to be compared with any compends of divinity that have been published to the world in any of the churches called reformed.

The persons that in general attend those catechetical exercises, are of various descriptions. Sometimes they are intended for the edification of those parishioners who are come to the years of discretion, and by supposition have made considerable progress in religious knowledge. Sometimes they are appropriated and designed for the benefit of the youth only, and sometimes both are combined. Christian

prudence regulated by particular circumstances, can alone direct what particular plan ought to be adopted. This was the beacon, or the mark for direction by which the Doctor studied to steer his course, and to which all the petty details of the plan were made to comply.

A clergyman within the bounds of his own parish, if his conduct be regulated by Christian principles, possesses an influence that no other member of the community enjoys. The station he holds in society, is of that moderate and respectable kind, that it must be his own fault if he be despised by persons of the most elevated rank in life. Both his education and his office qualify him to be fit company, and take an active part in the most genteel society. By the law of the land, a minister in the establishment is rendered perfectly independent of every man, if he choose. His situation in life does not necessarily expose him to those degrading compliances, which even the best of men have felt to be a snare to them, in the discharge of their duty. The most humble of the flock are also entitled to his regard. He is their counsellor in difficulties. When in affliction, he studies to soothe their minds; and in every emergence, they enjoy the pleasing reflection, that they have him to whom they can apply as to a friend.

Dr. Murray, besides the performance of his duty as a clergyman, which in his estimation was paramount to every thing else, was led by the natural benevolence of his disposition, to be very attentive to the sick of his parish. Before the Reformation, the visitation of those afflicted with disease by a person in holy orders, was esteemed the most efficacious re-

medy that could be resorted to. It was also one of the most profitable to the priest. A variety of absurd ceremonies were therefore introduced, which could have no other effect, than to deceive those who were in trouble, as well as impose upon the spectators of the transaction. Notwithstanding the base use which was then made, and is still made, by papists, under pretence of visiting the sick, and which have been abolished by the protestant churches, the visitation of those in distress is so obvious a duty, and furnishes so many opportunities of administering consolation to those that need it, that it will always hold a prominent place among the duties of him who has the cure of souls. Nevertheless, to perform it in a becoming profitable manner, is exceedingly difficult.

Human nature is to be beheld in a very affecting attitude, when it is overtaken by trouble. In the season of health and prosperity, the attention is often withdrawn from the contemplation of such scenes, and mankind are buoyed up with the thought, that such distressing events shall either not be their portion, or at least that they are removed at a great distance, and not to happen for a long time to come. The striking description given in the Gospel, is no uncommon occurrence. "I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" The Christian minister is often called to witness such scenes, when he has an opportunity of observing the gross ignorance and



carelessness about divine things, which prevail in the world. Multitudes are betrayed by the influence of bad principles, deceiving others, and themselves being deceived. To such a miserable state, there is frequently united great weakness of body, and its usual concomitant, a proportional imbecility of mind, the one influencing the other. In such a situation, they cannot attend to the things that are spoken. Besides, it is consistent with the experience of many clergymen, that they are often sent for when it is utterly impossible to render any assistance to the sick. They may be of some profit to others who are present; but the hope of being of any use to those whom they are more particularly called to visit, must be entirely abandoned. The practice of delaying to send for a clergyman, till the afflicted with disease are at the immediate point of death, is a custom evidently borrowed from the church of Rome, who on such occasions anoint the sick with oil. This is called extreme unction, and is one of the seven sacraments. In other words, it is looked upon as a safe passport to heaven itself.

Notwithstanding the laborious manner in which he executed the different functions of parish minister of Urr, he never desisted from the prosecution of his philological studies. The truth is, he was so parsimonious of his time, and had the art of parceling it out to such advantage, that he could accomplish much more business within the same space than ordinary men. This is the only true solution of his having performed so much during the short period of human life which he enjoyed. His ardour was

excessive. His exertions were not made in sudden fits, which, if they effect a great deal, are speedily relaxed, and degenerate into the opposite slothful remissness. On the contrary, his energies never abated, but seemed to be put into greater activity by being employed. During the whole time of his residence at Urr, his great work, "The Philosophical History of European Languages," was in preparation.

It must not be supposed, however, that this learned production was originally proposed at Urr. It is well known, that he had been long employed on the work, but how long is uncertain. In 1805, Dr. Murray gave an outline of it in his life of Bruce prefixed to an edition of that author's Travels. The probability is, that the subject had occupied his thoughts for a long series of years. To undertake such a history required an acquaintance with almost all known languages—the labour of research must have been excessive—and the difficulty of arranging the materials, even after they were collected, so arduous, that it is not surprising the author could never be contented with the manner in which the work was executed. The publication was therefore posthumous. The Rev. Dr. David Scot of Corstorphine, near Edinburgh, is the editor, who, in his preface, says, that "he has at least wished to do justice to the author, whose notice and friendship he was fortunate enough to share." The general opinion of the most competent judges is, that Dr. Scot has acquitted himself with uncommon skill and address upon so many difficult and intricate subjects, where the possession

of so very varied learning was required. It was a voluntary tribute to Dr. Murray as a man of distinguished genius and learning.

Dr. Moodie, the professor of oriental languages in the University of Edinburgh, died, as has been already mentioned, in June 1812. It was necessary therefore, that a successor should be appointed. There was no time to be lost, as the session of the college would commence in the course of a few months. Dr. Murray's eminence as an oriental scholar was well known, he was therefore proposed as a person in every respect qualified to fill the vacant chair. He himself seems to have been desirous of the situation, and his admirers imagined that when he stood as a candidate no one would venture to oppose him; they therefore calculated upon it as certain. In this, however, they were in a great mistake. Had it depended upon the acknowledged superiority of his acquirements, indeed, there could be no doubt of his having the first claim, but preferment in ordinary cases depends upon a very different cause. A more keen canvass hardly ever took place respecting the appointment of a professor in the University.

Without taking notice of recommendations produced by any other candidate, we shall only briefly state how Dr. Murray's pretensions were substantiated. The persons who interested themselves in his favour may be divided into two classes. First, Those who were not oriental scholars. Among these were some of the most eminent literary men and philosophers of Scotland, the greater number of whom either were at the time or had been professors in the University. The exertions of these gentlemen were founded upon

a conviction of the Doctor's merits and qualifications, and of the essential service they would render to the literature of the country, and to the fame of the University of Edinburgh in particular, by the introduction of so celebrated a professor into that seminary of learning. Among these it is sufficient to mention at present as professors, Dugald Stewart, Esq., Mr. John Playfair, Dr. James Gregory, Dr. Thomas Brown, Lord Woodhouselee, Lord Meadowbank, Mr. Baron Hume; there were besides, who were not professors, Sir Walter Scott, Bart., Francis Jeffrey, Esq., &c. Attestations from such characters might truly be said to be invaluable. Nothing superior could be produced. They show their high opinion of his very extensive attainments in general literature.

But the second class above alluded to, were the testimonies of such gentlemen as were intimately acquainted with oriental literature, and who, consequently, were eminently qualified to give a decided opinion upon the subject. There was perhaps not a single eminent oriental scholar in the civilized world who was unacquainted with Dr. Murray's great proficiency in eastern learning. The talents he exhibited in his edition of Bruce's Travels, and the profound and very varied literature he discovered, was universally acknowledged. To these a reference might, with the utmost safety be made. We shall only, however, at present briefly allude to those celebrated characters who were the immediate mean of his obtaining the professorship.

The testimonies in favour of the different candidates, are inserted at length in the Scots Magazine

for July 1812. It is not intended to make large extracts from a record, which is accessible to all, but only to state the substance of what it contains respecting Dr. Murray, afforded by gentlemen whose habits of study, and acquaintance with oriental learning, rendered them perfectly fit to form an estimate of the extent and peculiar character of the erudition he possessed.

The first is from Henry Salt, Esq., well known as a celebrated traveller. The facts which he states, carry great weight, and are worthy of the highest regard. This gentleman had twice visited Abyssinia, having been engaged by the British government to undertake a mission to that country. In a letter addressed to the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, dated 23d June 1812, he expresses his admiration of the deep erudition and extensive research displayed by Dr. Murray, and adds, that on his return to England in 1811, he recommended him to the Marquis Wellesley, *as the only person in the British dominions*, in his opinion, adequate to translate an Ethiopic letter, which he had brought from Ras Willida Selasé, addressed to the king. Mr. Salt's recommendation was attended to, and the Doctor finished the translation in the most satisfactory way. He afterwards translated, for the use of the British and Foreign Bible Society, an Ethiopic dissertation, presented to Mr. Salt by the prime minister of Abyssinia. The letter concludes in the following words:—

“To such honourable testimony as this, my individual opinion can add but little weight; though I cannot help taking the liberty of stating, that I think

the University, by such a choice of a professor, would do honour to itself, as well as a benefit to the literary world, as Mr. Murray's superior attainments in the various branches of the oriental languages, seem to me to qualify him particularly for such a situation."

Mr. Hamilton, Professor of Oriental Languages in the East India Company's college at Hertford, says, that he "found his acquisitions in oriental literature and languages so extensive and various, as greatly to exceed my power to appreciate them accurately."

Principal Baird, who formerly was Professor of Hebrew, and one of his early patrons, expressed himself in similar encomiastic language. And Dr. Dickson, who was one of the candidates, withdrew his name.

On the 8th of July, he was elected Professor of Oriental Languages, but only by a majority of two votes. On the 15th of the same month, the University conferred upon him the degree of Doctor in Divinity. Upon the 26th of August, he was introduced to the *Senatus Academicus*, and formally installed a professor in the University in the usual manner, by one of the magistrates or bailies, on the part of the town council the patrons, attended by one of the town clerks, who read the commission. On the subsequent 31st of October, he commenced teaching the public class.

He very early in the session published, for the use of his students, "Outlines of Oriental Philology." This was a subject with which he was very conversant. Having long revolved every topic connected with it in his mind, it is not surprising, as is confi-

dently affirmed, that it was composed for publication after he had come to Edinburgh to begin his college course. He himself might certainly be said to have been an enthusiast in that kind of learning : he therefore considered it as an indispensable duty to afford every facility to the students under his care to enable them to acquire as accurate a knowledge of the principles of oriental grammar as possible, and at the same time to cherish in their minds a love of such studies. The work itself is universally allowed to be exceedingly ingenious, and to contain original ideas respecting some grammatical niceties. This sort of speculation, if the expression may be used, was what he delighted in, and it must be admitted, admirably suited the character of his genius. He was exceedingly careful upon all occasions not to allow his ingenuity to mislead him, and viewed with a watchful, or rather jealous eye, his own investigations. The example and want of success of multitudes who had cultivated philology with ardour, he considered as a warning not to indulge in idle fancies. The " *Outlines*" afford the most unequivocal demonstration of what might have been expected from him had it pleased providence to have prolonged his life.

Dr. Murray never possessed a vigorous constitution, and his sedentary, studious habits were not likely to improve it. Though not strong, it does not appear that he had any formed disease, till a few years before his death. His studies could not be said to have suffered much interruption. Upon his removal to Edinburgh, however, it soon appeared that the seeds of a mortal disease had been sown.

He began his course at the usual time, and great expectations were formed in regard to it by his friends and the public, but especially by the students of divinity. He was quite in his element in this situation, and spared no pains to perform his duty with the most scrupulous attention.

He taught the class for about four months with very little interruption, though during the whole of that time he had to struggle with an asthmatic complaint and general debility. He persisted in continuing to lecture, perhaps longer than he ought to have done, till at last he was unwillingly compelled to leave it of. He was now confined to the house, and was under the necessity of declining to be seen by his numerous and respected friends who called inquiring after the state of his health. During the whole of this time his ardour in prosecuting his peculiar studies never appeared to be in the least abated. Even when unable to attend the public class, he taught Persic to a few gentlemen in his own lodging. He was prevailed upon to take the assistance of an amanuensis, and even on the day before he died, when Mrs. Murray arrived in town from Urr, (she had been informed of his situation without his knowledge) she found him quite busily engaged with this gentleman, and with a great variety of papers before him.

The activity of his mind and the benevolence of his disposition were very extraordinary. He was always ready to contribute of his stores liberally, and whenever he saw that the exertion of his peculiar talents would be beneficial to mankind, it was never withheld. He was far above the petty prejudices of



party, and every scheme that evidently had a tendency to promote the improvement of society was certain of his approbation and patronage. He took a most sincere interest in whatever regarded India, and viewed the means that have been of late years employed to disseminate useful knowledge in that extensive continent with more than ordinary attention. The labours of the missionaries in particular, and the wide field which their intimate acquaintance with many of the eastern languages, hitherto not known to Europeans, had exposed to view, naturally excited in his mind the most lively sensations.

An accidental fire at Serampore in Bengal had destroyed the printing house of the missionaries, in which many manuscripts, founts of types, &c. were consumed. It was thought necessary to solicit pecuniary assistance from those in this country who might be supposed to feel for that event. The late Dr. Charles Stuart of Dunearn transmitted to Dr. Murray a copy of a circular letter containing an account of the loss that had been sustained. Dr. Stuart's words are, "Professor Murray favoured me with a most obliging reply, in which, although he gave no expectation of pecuniary assistance from that quarter, he offered to write an essay, with the view of pointing out the great importance of the mission, and particularly of the translation of the Scriptures into the language of India, towards promoting civilization and science, and the commercial interests of Great Britain. After his arrival in Edinburgh in the beginning of the winter session, to attend his college duties, I waited on him, and reminded him of this; but I found him, although equally zealous in the

cause, and disposed to undertake the intended measure, too much engaged with the necessary business of his course to set about it. He proposed, however, of his own accord, to send me a sketch of his plan, and in the letter which contained it, he expressed his permission to me, if I chose, to publish it."

The letter was accordingly published, together with an extract from another letter. They both discover the discernment of the author, and the luminous and comprehensive views he had of the subject he proposed to discuss. The effects about to result from the translation of the Scriptures into every language, he thinks are indistinctly comprehended by several of its friends, and still more imperfectly by the public at large. Many consider it as an undertaking purely religious, suggested by an enthusiastic benevolence, but which in the issue must be defeated by the indolence and superstitions of barbarians. He does not enter upon the discussion of the benefits of true religion, but he thinks, that the labours of *The British and Foreign Bible Society* are opening a way for enlarging useful knowledge, and conferring essential advantages on all concerned in its operations.

Great Britain is the chief residence of civilization and science. Nothing has been more anxiously desired by scientific men than a perfect survey of the natural and moral condition of the globe. He esteems no period so favourable to the accomplishment of these views as the present, because a regular system has been formed for visiting every tribe on the face of the earth, for translating a large popular work into every spoken dialect, and for opening in that manner an intercourse with the most obscure nations.

It must not be forgotten that the history of the human species is still incomplete for want of facts, and that of the languages spoken on the earth we know not a fourth part.

The exertions of the society are providing means of doing good for future generations. The greatest benefit may arise from having a command over the books and literature of a distant country. The writings of the Jesuits have prepared the way for entering China, and opening an intercourse with Abyssinia. The missionaries at Serampore have given us more Indian literature during a few years, than we have had since the British took possession of the country. The advantages that may result from what they have already done, and what they yet promise to do are incalculable. By reducing these foreign languages into a regular form, a road is opened not only for the introduction of the Christian religion, but for instruction in all the arts and sciences, so that the improvements which have been made in European and civilized countries may be expected, in the course of time, to be introduced among the most distant nations and barbarous tribes of men.

The political and commercial advantages resulting from an intercourse opened with the whole world are surely very obvious.

These constitute the chief topics that are insisted on in this ingenious letter.

Dr. Murray taught the class with great popularity and success, and seemed to inspire the students with an ardour similar to what he himself possessed. In order to communicate more instruction, besides teaching the elements of grammar, and causing them

explain select passages from the Hebrew Scriptures, which was their daily practice, he delivered a course of lectures on oriental literature, embracing a very wide extent. These were chiefly intended to enlarge their views respecting those subjects that ought chiefly to occupy their attention, and, at the same time, to allure them to prosecute with renewed vigour the studies in which they were engaged.

The state of his health prevented him from completing his plan, or even of being able to do the duties of a whole session. We are told by his biographer, that a lecture which was left unfinished, and does not appear to have been delivered, has the following introduction.—“It is with exceeding regret, that I am compelled, by the state of ill health, into which I have unexpectedly fallen, to bring our labours to a premature termination. I have waited day after day to see if any partial degree of recovery might enable me to continue attendance, and confirm your grammatical attainments by a greater extent of practice in reading. My expectations have not been fulfilled.”

It is probable, that this formed a part of what was intended to be his valedictory address for the season. No one of any feeling can read it without emotion. That a person of so singular endowments, and from whom so much was expected, should be arrested in his career, and not allowed to exercise the talents of which he was in possession, presents one of those mysterious arrangements of providence, of which our imperfect faculties can have no conception.

It has been already mentioned that from infancy he was of a weakly constitution. By the utmost re-

gularity and care, however, he could not be said to have been in very bad health, and was seldom prevented from prosecuting his studies. The disease with which he was afflicted for many years, was asthma, and after his decease it appeared that his lungs were of a most preternatural growth, so that it was surprising he had lived so long. A singular circumstance in his history is, that till within a few hours of his death, he never seems to have despaired of recovering. What was obvious to every other person does not seem to have struck himself. He felt his weakness, and could not fail to be sensible of his emaciation. But not having constant acute pain, and enjoying frequent intervals of relief, the deceitfulness of the malady was not observed by him.

He had been confined to his room in March, yet he never relaxed his diligence. The following letter, which was communicated to me by Dr. John Borthwick Gilchrist, and, as far I know, has never been published, is very illustrative of Dr. Murray's history at this time. It was written exactly three weeks before the day of his death.

*" 5, College Street, 25th March, 1813.*

DEAR DOCTOR,—I am extremely obliged to you for the call you did me the honour to make me, some little time ago. I was very sorry that I could not see you, being confined by a very severe illness from which I am recovering slowly.

You did me a piece of great gratification by letting me have a perusal of the Gazette, and the other Indian papers, relating to the examinations. You must, I doubt not, feel much pleasure in seeing the

language which you first reduced into a regular form, by grammar and lexicography, now studied with assiduity, and likely to supersede every defective jargon of it, formerly current. Indeed when I consider the great number of your works, and the uncommon degree of perspicuity, and didactic ingenuity which appear in them, I am astonished at your industry and skill, and wonder much, that every Hindoostanee scholar did not receive them in preference to all others.

The writing of Hindoostanee, Persic, and Sunskrit, according to a key, is a very excellent method, both as conveying the pronunciation, and being plainer for a student than the original character. And nothing can be a better exercise than to turn the lesson into the native character, which fixes both on the memory. I mean to imitate you in a few small works, which, if my health afterwards permit me to compose, I mean to publish here. They relate to the Sunskrit, Greek, and others.

I go to the country, as soon as I am able to travel, and return in October to settle in Edinburgh.

When I come to town, I will esteem it a great favour if you communicate to me occasionally any Indian intelligence.—I am, Dear Sir, with the greatest respect and esteem, your very faithful humble servant,

ALEX. MURRAY."

This letter is very curious in many respects, and is therefore inserted entire, the original being now before me. It shows the infirm state in which

Dr. Murray was at the time that he wrote it—the eagerness with which he cultivated Indian literature even in that debilitated condition;—it also shows some of the literary projects which he was revolving in his mind—and, at the same time, how little aware he was of his real situation.

Mrs. Murray and the children had remained at Urr during the winter, for he did not intend to resign the living till the subsequent autumn, and therefore proposed to spend the summer in the country, which the critical state of his health seemed to require. He never could be induced to consent that his family should come to Edinburgh, so persuaded was he that it was unnecessary in so far as it regarded himself. At last he agreed that Mrs. Murray should come to town, and fixed the 16th of April as the day when he would look for her. He seems to have complied with this rather from the severity of the weather preventing him from undertaking a journey to Urr, than from any consciousness of his hazardous situation.

His friend and colleague, however, the late Dr. Thomas Brown, his physician, was quite aware of his dangerous state, and got information conveyed to Mrs. Murray. She, therefore, immediately repaired to Edinburgh, and arrived upon the 13th. Rapid as the progress of the disease was latterly, he was never confined to bed, and was able to walk without assistance in his room. When he leaned on his wife's arm as he went to bed, he told her that he had never till then taken any assistance. He slept well during the night, and thought himself much refreshed in the morning. He rose at the usual time, and did not go

to bed in the course of the day. When his medical attendants visited him, though they expressed nothing in words, yet he had observed that they were alarmed, and, after they had left him, he remarked to Mrs. Murray "that they seemed to think him in a worse state than he had any idea of;" and added, "if I have deceived you, I was myself deceived."

This was the first public intimation he had ever given of his being sensible of his real situation, for when taking leave of Mrs. Murray's brother, who had accompanied her to town, he had, in the course of the same morning, expressed his hope, that they would soon be able to join him in the country. The behaviour of the physicians, however, opened his eyes, and with that composure and serenity of mind which Christianity can alone inspire, he showed the utmost resignation to the will of the Almighty.

After giving some directions about his private affairs, he warned Mrs. Murray to prepare herself for an event which he now saw was very soon to happen. He did not retire to bed till about eleven o'clock, and spent a very unquiet and restless night. He was often heard to be engaged in prayer, and at one time repeated the 19th verse of the Scots version of the 118th Psalm.

" O set ye open unto me  
The gates of righteousness ;  
Then will I enter into them,  
And I the Lord will bless."

And when Mrs. Murray subjoined the 20th verse, he expressed, in his countenance, the greatest warmth of affection.



“ This is the gate of God, by it  
The just shall enter in,  
Thee will I praise, for thou me heardst,  
And hast my safety been.”

His faculties were not impaired to the very last, for when incapable of expressing himself in words, it was evident to all that he was quite sensible of what was going forward. He expired a little after six o'clock in the morning, 15th April 1813, in the 37th year of his age.

His death, though long expected by his friends, was certainly more sudden than they had any idea of. He might be said to have died at his post, for he was hardly a single day idle. The day before he died, he was as busily occupied in his studies as he had ever been in his life.

He was interred in the churchyard of the Greyfriar's, Edinburgh, close to the wall, on the north-west corner of the church. No monument has been erected to his memory or to point out his grave.

Beside Mrs. Murray, he left a son and daughter. The daughter did not long survive him. His majesty was pleased to confer on his widow an annual pension of eighty pounds.

The annals of Scottish literature cannot produce a more extraordinary character than Dr. Alexander Murray. The difficulties with which he had to struggle, from the very commencement of his studies, would not only have checked the progress, but strangled in the birth the efforts of almost any other adventurer. Besides his indefatigable perseverance, which no untoward circumstances seemed capable of

repressing, the great merit which he, in a remarkable degree discovered in early life, was that natural quickness which he seems to have possessed of profiting by every hint, and of turning to the best advantage incidents which the most of men would have neglected to improve. In regard to the faculty of acquiring languages, he is unquestionably without an equal in this country, and perhaps has had no superior in any other. His modesty and unassuming manners were acknowledged by all.

The early age at which he died is also another remarkable feature in his character. He could not be said to have reached the ordinary period of human life, yet his acquirements in almost every branch of ancient or of modern learning were unexampled.

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DR. THOMAS BROWN.

Upon the 2d of May, 1810, the patrons re-elected Mr. Professor Dugald Stewart, as already mentioned, with Dr. Thomas Brown as his colleague.

Dr. Brown was the youngest son of the Rev. Samuel Brown, minister of Kirkmabreck, in the stewartry of Kirkcudbright, and of Mary Smith, daughter of John Smith, Esq. of Wigton. He was born on the 9th day of January, 1778.

In consequence of the death of his father, his mother removed with her family to Edinburgh, and it was here he was first instructed in the elements of

knowledge. He was naturally of a very ardent temper of mind, and his passion for books very early discovered itself. He does not appear to have attended any of the schools in Edinburgh, his education being domestic, and chiefly conducted by his mother.

When about seven years old, he was removed to London by his uncle, Captain Smith, of the 37th regiment, who had retired from the service, and resided in the metropolis. He was placed at first in school at Camberwell. Here he only remained a year, and was removed to Chiswick, where he was several years. He was next sent to Bromley, and afterwards to Kensington, but left it before he had reached his sixteenth year. At these different seminaries he made a distinguished figure, and held the highest place in his respective classes.

It does not appear that Dr. Brown attended either the Latin or Greek classes at the University of Edinburgh. He studied Logic, however, under Dr. Finlayson, whose approbation of him was so decidedly expressed, that he felt disappointed, when afterwards, from political differences of opinion, that individual was unfriendly to his interests.

In 1793, he spent part of the summer in Liverpool. He was then introduced to Dr. James Currie, the biographer of the poet Burns. About the same time, Professor Dugald Stewart's *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind* were published. Dr. Currie recommended a careful perusal of the work to Dr. Brown. And during the course of the subsequent winter, he was one of Mr. Stewart's pupils.

Dr. Brown attended such classes of the College as are usual for gentlemen who are desirous of having the benefit of a liberal education.

The first volume of Darwin's *Zoonomia* was published in 1792, and the second in 1796. It excited an uncommon interest in the literary world. Dr. Brown's observations upon this work were composed when only nineteen years of age, and discover an acuteness of remark, and ability much above his years. He was advised, by some of his literary friends, to submit his remarks to Dr. Darwin, and for that purpose commenced a correspondence with him, but, like most controversies, it was far from being agreeable to either party. This was what first brought Dr. Brown into public notice, and no doubt it was very extraordinary, that so young an author should have the courage and address, to attack a theory composed by such a veteran, and that had so many admirers.

Dr. Brown was, about this time, a member of some of the literary societies, that have been long established in the University, and have produced the most beneficial effects. Some of his associates have risen to very great eminence. It may be sufficient to mention Brougham, Leyden, Horner, Jeffrey. He was also connected with the *Edinburgh Review*, and wrote some articles of distinguished merit.

About the same time, he seems to have hesitated what profession he should make choice of. For a short time he directed his attention to the law, but this he afterwards abandoned, and finally resolved upon medicine, and attended the usual course pursued by medical students, from the year 1798, till

the year 1803, when he graduated. The subject of his Thesis was *de Somno*. It is universally allowed to possess a great deal of ingenuity, and to be remarkable for the purity of the Latinity. A few months after receiving his degree, he published the first edition of his poems in two volumes. In 1806, Dr. Gregory, who had a high value for his talents, assumed him as a coadjutor for answering letters of consultation from a distance, to which, after considering the respective cases, Dr. Brown wrote out their joint opinion in reply.

Several attempts were made by his literary friends to get him connected with the University, and an academical life seems to have been the great object of his own ambition. Upon the death of Dr. Blair, he was a candidate for the rhetorical chair, and upon the death of Dr. Finlayson for that of logic. Though well known to be a man of abilities, and possessing powerful recommendations from very eminent philosophers, he was unsuccessful. At last, as has been already mentioned, when Mr. Stewart was disposed to retire, feeling the infirmities of age, he was preferred to be professor of Moral Philosophy. He discharged the duties of this office with great ability, and was one of the most popular lecturers that ever held a chair in the University. It was more suited to his studies and his genius, than any other professorship. Since his death his lectures have been published. They have the advantage of being printed from his MSS, exactly as they were delivered, and have had a very extensive sale.

Dr. Brown's constitution had always been but feeble. Towards the end of autumn 1819, he re-

turned to Edinburgh in health and spirits, after having resided some time at Dunkeld, and it was remarked by all his acquaintance, that he looked unusually well. This, however, was of short continuance. A short time before the Christmas holidays, he felt rather unwell. He, therefore, confined himself to the house, and hoped that by care he would be able to meet his class at their conclusion.

He rapidly grew worse, and was advised by his physicians to try what effect removing to a milder climate would have. He undertook a voyage to London, but all was unavailing. He died there on the 2d of April 1820, in the 43d year of his age, much lamented by a numerous circle of friends, whose attachment, his amiableness of disposition, and kindness of heart, joined to his native elegance of mind, had strongly secured.

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Having given an account in the former part of this history of the foundation of the different professorships in the University, it now only remains to notice briefly those professorships that have been recently endowed.

#### AGRICULTURE.

The Professorship of Agriculture was founded by Mr. William Pulteney Johnstone in the year 1790. The present professor, Dr. Coventry, is the first that held the chair, and he is now the senior professor in the University. His lectures have, since their com-

mencement, excited uncommon interest among the proprietors of land, and their tenants. Many improvements have been introduced into agriculture within the last forty years, and to these the lectures of Dr. Coventry have contributed most essentially. The labours of Lord Kames and Dr. Walker doubtless led the way, but the numerous advances that have been made during the period referred to, have certainly been very extraordinary. A new spirit has introduced itself among the cultivators of the ground, which was formerly unknown, and promises to be productive of the most beneficial effects. The appointment of the professor is in the gift of the Johnstones of Westerhall.

#### CLINICAL SURGERY.

A Regius Professor of Clinical Surgery was appointed in 1803. Mr. James Russell, a member of the Royal College of Surgeons, is the present lecturer, and was the first that held the office, on 7th July 1803. He is at liberty to select such patients as he judges best fitted to be of advantage to the students. The cases, it is universally admitted, are selected with judgment. It is necessary to attend Clinical Surgery, before a Diploma from the Royal College of Surgeons can be obtained.

#### MEDICAL JURISPRUDENCE.

The late Dr. Duncan was the immediate cause of a Professor of Medical Jurisprudence being appointed. At the end of his course of lectures on the

theory of physic, he delivered a few discourses upon this subject, and it was not long until a separate professor was established by the Crown, which took place on the 1st of May 1807, Dr. Andrew Duncan, jun. being the first professor. There is no other establishment of the same kind in Great Britain, but similar professorships are well known on the continent, in Germany in particular. It is there called *Medicina Forensis*.

Professor Christison succeeded Dr. Alison, 23d February 1822. His course of Lectures embraces the following topics:—

Causes of the slow progress of this branch in Britain—judicial inspections—the points to be attended to in examining external injuries and marks—the signs of natural disease, and the natural causes of sudden death—pseudo morbid appearances of effects of disease or violence—mode of conducting a medico-legal inspection—medico-legal reports—medical evidence.

I. Violent death; 1. by external injuries; 2. by asphyxia, or stoppage of respiration; 3. by poisons—subdivision of these as to nature and effects; 4. by burning; 5. by freezing; 6. by electricity; 7. by famine.

II. Questions relating to pregnancy—rape, criminal abortion, concealment of pregnancy, child-murder, exposure of infants.

III. Disqualifications—1. mental derangements, idiopathic, symptomatic; 2. bodily derangement for military service, marriage.

IV. Medical police, or preservation of public health—1. adulteration of food, &c; 2. diseases in



cident to trades ; 3. local situation ; 4. contagion, quarantine, lazarettos ; 5. public hospitals, prisons, &c. ; 6. police of medicine.

#### MILITARY SURGERY.

Dr. Ballingall is the present Professor. A Regius professorship of Military Surgery was established in the University during the late war, Dr. John Thomson being the first appointed, who afterwards resigned. His course comprises the following topics :—History and progress of military surgery ; the preservation of the health of soldiers, in camp, in barracks, and billets ; hospitals ; transportation of sick and wounded ; surgical diseases, wounds, ophthalmia, syphilis ; diseases of troops on foreign stations and in tropical climates.

Army and navy surgeons are at liberty to attend this class without paying any fee, according to the regulations of Government.

#### CONVEYANCING.

A course of lectures is delivered on Conveyancing by Mr. Macvey Napier. He read those lectures originally under the sanction and authority of the Writers to his Majesty's Signet, attendance on them being necessary for being taken on trials for admission to that body. On the 5th January 1825, he was constituted by the Town Council, the patrons, a professor of that branch of jurisprudence within the College, and admitted a member of the *Senatus Academicus*. The instruction which he communicates, is of great importance not only as to his particular de-

partment, but as respects the general principles of law.

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The appointments that were made during the period embraced by this volume, of professors, from time to time, have been generally alluded to at the close of the biography of those whom they succeeded. In order, however, to exhibit this part of the history in a connected form, the following statement is given, of the respective nominations of those who now occupy the chairs, in the order in which they occurred.

The very Reverend GEORGE H. BAIRD, D. D. 3d July 1793

*Agriculture*—DR. ANDREW COVENTRY, First Professor,  
22d Dec. 1790

*Chemistry*—DR. THOMAS CHARLES HOPE, conjunct with DR.  
JOSEPH BLACK, 21st October 1795

*Anatomy and Surgery*—DR. ALEXANDER MONRO, Joint  
Professor with his father, 14th November 1798

*Church History*—DR. HUGH MEIKLEJOHN, succeeded DR.  
THOMAS HARDIE, 21st January 1799

*Midwifery*—DR. JAMES HAMILTON, succeeded his father,  
9th April 1800

*Universal History*—WILLIAM FRASER TYTLER, succeeded  
his father, appointed a Lord of Session,  
18th March 1801

*Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*—DR. ANDREW BROWN, suc-  
ceeded DR. HUGH BLAIR, 14th November 1801

*Clinical Surgery*—JAMES RUSSELL, First Professor,  
7th July 1803

*Natural History*—ROBERT JAMESON, succeeded DR. JOHN  
WALKER, 30th March 1804

- Greek*—GEORGE DUNBAR, succeeded ANDREW DALZEL,  
23d October 1805
- Logic*—DR. DAVID RITCHIE, succeeded DR. JAMES FINLAY-  
SON, 24th February 1808
- Divinity*—DR. WILLIAM RITCHIE, succeeded DR. ANDREW  
HUNTER, 10th May 1809
- Hebrew and Chaldee Languages*—DR. ALEXANDER BRUN-  
TON, succeeded DR. A. MURRAY, 29th May 1813
- Natural Philosophy*—JOHN LESLIE, succeeded JOHN PLAY-  
FAIR, 5th August 1819
- Mathematics*—WILLIAM WALLACE, succeeded JOHN LES-  
LIE, 8th September 1819
- Botany*—DR. ROBERT GRAHAM, succeeded DR. DANIEL  
RETHERFORD, 5th January 1820
- Moral Philosophy*—JOHN WILSON, succeeded DR. THOMAS  
BROWN, 19th July 1820
- Humanity*—JAMES PILLANS, succeeded ALEXANDER CHRIS-  
TISON, 26th July 1820
- Universal History*—WILLIAM FRASER TYTLER, who suc-  
ceeded his father, 18th March 1801, and SIR WIL-  
LIAM HAMILTON, appointed Joint Professors,  
21st March 1821
- Practice of Physic*—DR. JAMES HOME, succeeded DR. JAMES  
GREGORY, 6th June 1821
- Materia Medica*—DR. ANDREW DUNCAN, junior, succeeded  
DR. JAMES HOME, 4th July 1821
- Theory of Physic*—DR. DUNCAN, senior, succeeded DR.  
GREGORY, 30th December 1789, and on 8th August  
1821, DR. DUNCAN and DR. WILLIAM PULTENEY  
ALISON, were elected Joint Professors.
- Scots Law*—GEORGE JOSEPH BELL, succeeded DAVID HUME,  
appointed a Baron of Exchequer, 6th February 1822

*Medical Jurisprudence*—DR. ROBERT CHRISTISON, succeeded  
ed DR. W. P. ALISON, 23d February 1822

*Military Surgery*—DR. GEORGE BALLINGALL, succeeded DR.  
JOHN THOMSON, 18th January 1823

*Conveyancing*—MACVEY NAPIER, first Professor,  
5th January 1825

*Civil Law*—DOUGLAS CHEAPE, succeeded ALEXANDER IR-  
VING, appointed a Lord of Session, 18th Dec. 1826

*Divinity*—DR. WILLIAM RITCHIE, who had succeeded DR.  
HUNTER, 10th May 1809, and DR. CHALMERS, were  
elected Joint Professors, on 31st October 1827

The history of the University is now, as proposed, brought down from 1756 to the year 1829; and as the introduction to this volume contained a list of the *Senatus Academicus* at the first of these dates, it is thought necessary, in order to complete the work, to give a list of the Professors under their respective faculties, as they stood at the commencement of the Session 1829-30.

The Very Reverend GEORGE H. BAIRD, D.D. *Principal*.

#### L—LITERATURE AND PHILOSOPHY.

*Latin or Humanity*—JAMES PILLANS.

*Greek*—GEORGE DUNBAR.

*Mathematics*—WILLIAM WALLACE.

*Logic*—DR. DAVID RITCHIE.

*Moral Philosophy*—JOHN WILSON.

*Natural Philosophy*—JOHN LESLIE.

*Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*—DR. ANDREW BROWN.

*Universal History*.—SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON.

*Agriculture*—DR. ANDREW COVENTRY.

## II.—THEOLOGY.

*Divinity*—DR. THOMAS CHALMERS.

*Divinity and Church History*—DR. HUGH MEIKLEJOHN.

*Hebrew and Chaldee Languages*—DR. ALEX. BRUNTON.

## III.—LAW.

*Civil Law*—DOUGLAS CHEAPE.

*Law of Scotland*—GEORGE JOSEPH BELL.

*Conveyancing*.—MACVEY NAPIER.

*Public Law*—ROBERT HAMILTON.

## IV.—MEDICINE.

*Theory of Physic*.—DR. WILLIAM P. ALISON.

*Materia Medica*—DR. ANDREW DUNCAN.

*Chemistry*—DR. THOMAS C. HOPE.

*Practice of Physic*—DR. JAMES HOME.

*Anatomy*—DR. ALEXANDER MONRO.

*Natural History*—ROBERT JAMESON.

*Military Surgery*—DR. GEORGE BALLINGALL.

*Midwifery*—DR. JAMES HAMILTON.

*Clinical Surgery*—JAMES RUSSELL.

*Botany*—DR. ROBERT GRAHAM.

*Medical Jurisprudence*—DR. ROBERT CHRISTISON.



## APPENDIX.

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### No. I.

*List of the Principal and Professors of the University of Edinburgh from 1756 to 1812, of whom Biographical Sketches are contained in this volume, with the dates of their appointments.*

Thomas Young, Midwifery, February 18th	. 1756.
Adam Ferguson, Natural Philosophy, July 4th	. 1759.
Hugh Blair, Rhetoric, June 27th	. 1760.
John Hope, Botany and Materia Medica, April 25th	1761.
William Robertson, Principal, March 10th	. 1762.
James Russell, Natural Philosophy, May 23d	. 1764.
John Gregory, Practice of Physic, February 12th	. 1766.
Joseph Black, Chemistry, April 30th	. 1766.
Francis Home, Materia Medica, June 1st	. 1768.
Andrew Dalziel, Greek, December 16th	. 1772.
John Bruce, Logic, January 26th	. 1774.
John Robison, Natural Philosophy, March 9th	. 1774.
Dugald Stewart, Mathematics, and Moral Philosophy,	
June 14th	1775.
John Hill, Latin, June 28th	. 1775.
James Gregory, Theory of Physic, June 19th	. 1776.
Andrew Hunter, Professor of Divinity	. 1779.
Allan Maconochie, Law of Nature and Nations	1779.
John Walker, Natural History	. 1779.

Alex. Fraser Tytler, Universal History, Feb. 16th	1780.
Alexander Hamilton, Midwifery, November 15th	1780.
John Playfair, Mathematics	1785.
Daniel Rutherford, Botany, November 15th	1786.
James Finlayson, Logic	1786.
Thomas Hardie, Church History, July 30th	1788.
Andrew Duncan, Institutes of Medicine, Dec. 30th	1789.
William Moodie, Hebrew, July 3d	1793.
Alexander Christison, Latin	1806.
Thomas Brown, Moral Philosophy, May 2d	1810.
Alexander Murray, Oriental Languages, July 8th	1812.

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## No. II.

### *A brief Account of the Library of the University of Edinburgh.*

IN the course of this work I have mentioned various circumstances, respecting the Library of the University, which it is unnecessary to repeat in this place. The account which I now propose to give shall be very brief.

The Library contains a considerable number of curious manuscripts on vellum, which have been presented from time to time, principally by gentlemen who had received their education at the University, and who deposited them there that they might be preserved in safety. Among others, there are some Missals, beautifully illuminated, in particular that which belonged to the Monastery at the Siennes, near Edinburgh, and presented by Dr. Thomas Douglas. The execution is admirable, and it is in a state of high preservation. In consequence of the University being founded a century before the Advocates' Library, it is much richer in manuscripts of this kind, though in every other respect not to be compared with that very extensive collection.

About the time that the charter for the foundation of the



University was granted, the principles of the reformation having spread in Scotland, had taken a fast hold of the minds of many, and as an invariable consequence, a taste for literature began to gain ground. The clergy of the city of Edinburgh had warmly received the new doctrine, and were joined by others, whose taste for literature was similar to their own. Among this number was Mr. Clement Lital, who, in the year 1580, left his library "to the City and Kirk of God." It consisted of about three hundred volumes, and seems to have been more particularly designed for the use of the clergy of the city of Edinburgh. It is well known that a library was attached to every cathedral, and even to every monastery, long before the invention of the art of printing. In most large cities the clergy formed themselves into a body, and, among other regulations, it was generally resolved that a library should be established. It was in this manner that the library of Sion College was established, which is the property of the clergy of the city of London, and it cannot admit of a doubt that something similar to this was intended by Mr. Lital. In the Town Council records, the collection of books thus left, is expressly called "The Town's Library," for the following entry is to be found, "The Town's Library transported to the College on the 18th September, 1584." There is a printed catalogue of those books. They principally consist of divinity, among which are copies of works that are now hardly to be met with, and a degree of industry in the collector is discovered at that time very uncommon.

It is unnecessary, and besides would be very tedious, to mention all the names of the contributors to the library. The register in which they are inserted consists of fourscore folio pages. James Douglas, who is designated *Prosecretarius Regius*, left to the library his books and mathematical instruments. What were included under the latter it is difficult to say, because they appear to have been lost.

The distinguished genius of Drummond of Hawthornden is universally known. In consequence of the unexpected death of a lady, whom he passionately loved, he left his native

country, and remained abroad for about eight years. In the course of his travels he formed what was then considered as an excellent collection of books, which he bequeathed to the University. Some of these are very curious.

Doctor Robert Johnstone, also an *alumnus* of the University, had acquired a considerable fortune abroad. He took great interest in whatever related to the prosperity of his native city. Besides appropriating certain sums of money to the Trinity Hospital, he, by will, on 7th January, 1653, left one thousand pounds sterling for the maintenance of eight *Bursars*. He also built four chambers for the accommodation of the students, and added a considerable number of books to the library, of which his executors printed a catalogue. He was the author of a history of Great Britain, from 1572 to 1628.

The Rev. James Nairn, minister of Pittenweem, in Fife-shire, founded two Bursaries for students of Divinity, and bequeathed his library to the University. This took effect in 1694. A catalogue was also printed of Mr. Nairn's books, and they amounted to one thousand seven hundred and forty-three volumes—the largest bequest which the library has received from its foundation.

Many additions were from time to time made to the library. When the books that were suggested as necessary for the improvement of the students were expensive, the Patrons gave directions to the College treasurer to advance money for that purpose. Thus an order of this kind is recorded to have been given for Walton's Polyglott Bible, upon the 17th of October, 1657, and many other similar orders might easily be quoted from the Minutes of the Town Council. Some of the nobility were also liberal in this respect. The *Hopetoun* family deserve to be particularly mentioned. Those who publicly graduated, generally presented the works of some good authors as a testimony of their gratitude for the honour that had been conferred upon them.

The donations during the greater part of the late century were not considerable, and do not deserve to be mentioned.



Dr. John Stevenson bequeathed his library, which was rather select than numerous. Mr. Dalzel, as residuary legatee to Mr. Duke Gordon, was empowered to make choice of any of the books in his collection, which he accordingly did with judgment and discretion. And the last that I shall mention was the late Dr. William Thomson, Professor of Anatomy in the University of Oxford, who bequeathed the whole of his library to the College. The books chiefly consist of works upon medical subjects, but he has discovered great discrimination in the selection.

It is impossible to ascertain whether the students were originally required to contribute to the support of the library. It is probable that they were not. At the suggestion of Principal Robertson, and with a view that the students might be indulged with the liberty of borrowing books from the library, every one was required, at his *matriculation*, that is, upon being enrolled as a member of the University, to contribute at least two and sixpence for its maintenance. No alteration was made upon this arrangement for nearly half a century, until within these few years it has been determined that the contribution shall be ten shillings. The same regulations, in regard to depositing the value of the book which is borrowed is still retained.

The fund thus raised for the purchase of books is no doubt very considerable, but the University of Edinburgh enjoys the same privilege with the other British Universities, in having a right to every book that issues from the press within the dominions of His Majesty.\* So that if the act of Parliament continues as it now stands, the collection of books must in-

\* The act of Parliament entitling them to this was passed only within these very few years. By this act one copy of each book must be given to each of the following public bodies: 1. Stationers Hall; 2. Oxford; 3. Cambridge; 4. Dublin; 5. Edinburgh; 6. Glasgow; 7. St. Andrews; and 8. Aberdeen Universities; 9. The British Museum; 10. Sion College, London; 11. The Advocates' Library. So that authors and publishers are laid under a contribution of eleven copies of every book which is published.

crease very rapidly. The library is open from eleven to three o'clock every lawful day.

Accommodation seems at first to have been provided for the books in some of the class-rooms, but in consequence of the inconveniences which resulted from this, the patrons passed an act upon the 15th of April 1642, for building a new library. I suspect, however, that this act did not take effect, and that in the mean time shelves were fitted up in the common hall. At last, in 1661, the foundation stone of the room in which the library was placed was laid by Sir Robert Murray of Priestfield, then Lord Provost of the city of Edinburgh. Lady Margaret Shoner of Forret contributed very liberally to the building. It was recently removed to make way for the completion of the present buildings, and the new Library Hall, and suite of rooms belonging to it, occupy the south range of the University, the interior being executed from a design by Mr. W. Playfair, and exhibiting very great architectural splendour and elegance.

There are at present some paintings in the great hall of the library, executed in a very peculiar style. These are portraits on wood of the early reformers, Luther, Calvin, Melancthon and others. There is not even a tradition at what time or how they came there, or who the artist was. The earliest mention made of them, as far as I know, is in the process against Principal Monro in 1690. The sixth charge against him was, that "he caused take down out of the Library, all the pictures of the protestant reformers, and when quarreled by some of the magistrates, gave this answer, That the sight of them might not be offensive to the chancellor when he came to visit the college."

The other more ancient pictures are an original picture of Buchanan on wood—one of John Knox—one of Mary of Guise, supposed to have been painted in her lifetime—one of Principal Rollock—an original picture of Lord Napier, the inventor of the logarithms presented by Lady Napier to the library in 1675—and also a picture of Drummond of Haw-

thornden, presented, as was mentioned in the body of the history, by Sir Robert Sibbald.

Of the modern pictures in the robing room it may be sufficient to mention one of Principal Robertson, by Raeburn, one of Dr. Adam Ferguson, another of Dr. James Finlayson, and two of General John Reid, who has left so large a sum of money to the University.

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### No. III.

#### *Botanic Garden.*

There is a Botanic Garden attached to the University. Various facts respecting its origin and progress have been mentioned in the body of the work. Without such an appendage the lectures of the professor could be of little use.

The present garden is situate near Inverleith Row, beyond Canonmills. It was by means of the exertions of the late Dr. John Hope, that a more favourable situation than the original one, was procured, and it was under his superintendence that the plan of the garden was contrived, and various admirable improvements in the culture of plants introduced. It remained as a memorial of his uncommon ardour in the cultivation of the science of Botany, and of the excellence of his judgment as well as the extent of his knowledge in laying out the ground. He had the influence to procure the aid of government more than once towards accomplishing his favourite object, and by indefatigable perseverance he at last succeeded in providing the University of Edinburgh with the most extensive botanical garden in Europe. The most appropriate conservatories were erected, ponds for the aquatic plants were formed, and in a short time it was enriched with an immense variety of vegetable productions from every part of the globe.

The garden, in Dr. Hope's time, and for many years after-

wards, was between Edinburgh and Leith. It was removed a few years ago to Inverleith Row, which in every respect is a more suitable situation, and better adapted to answer the purposes intended. The former situation was, at the time it was pitched upon by Dr. Hope, also very conveniently situate, but from the great increase of buildings in that neighbourhood, and their encroaching necessarily upon the ground, the case was materially altered. It was indispensably requisite for the health of the plants to procure another situation. Its present position is admirably fitted in every respect for a Botanic Garden.

The most unremitting exertions are made by the present professor, Dr. Graham, so that in its present state it will bear to be compared with any similar establishment in Europe, either in regard to management, or the variety of the plants which it contains.

The advantages to be derived by students of medicine from such an institution are very obvious.

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#### No. IV.

##### *Infirmary.*

It is impossible to teach the practice of medicine with any probability of success by a series of mere theoretical instructions, how skilfully soever they may be drawn up, or with whatever patience and zeal the teacher may discharge his duty. It is readily admitted that numerous advantages flow from the prelections of able professors, and, indeed, that no one can be considered as having received a thorough medical education, who has not possessed an opportunity of attending such lectures. But the smallest reflection must convince every one of the indispensable necessity of opportunities being afforded of carrying into real practice the instructions that may have

been delivered. It is perhaps impossible to communicate an adequate idea of any disease whatever by a mere verbal description. One of the most important branches therefore of a medical education is only to be obtained by personally visiting patients who labour under disease, and comparing its symptoms, progress, and termination, with the descriptions which may have been given by skilful teachers. It would be absurd to suppose that persons who are in opulent, or even in easy circumstances, would permit young inexperienced students to visit them promiscuously, far less to point out or to prescribe the proper method of cure. In all civilized nations, therefore, where the practice of medicine has been esteemed as a liberal profession, access has always been granted to medical students to visit such charitable institutions as have been erected for the purpose of affording relief to, or of soothing the numerous distresses to which man is subjected in this imperfect state.

These institutions have originally been established for the express purpose of affording relief to the indigent who are suffering under disease of any kind. Whilst they have the direct effect of alleviating the pain and contributing to the comfort of those who have the most powerful claims upon the humanity of the public, they also afford to the medical practitioner an opportunity of improving himself in the knowledge of the art which he professes; and thus a liberal and improved practice is introduced among that class of society who are the chief supporters of such establishments. The *Hospital* is the grand theatre where such practitioners can alone improve themselves, and their experience enriches the stock of the knowledge of the cure of diseases. As every one is subject to disease, such institutions react upon him who contributes to their support, and if they communicate no present relief to some individuals, the science itself is improved, and every one is interested in the result.

The Royal Infirmary is admirably calculated for the improvement of the students of medicine. The regulations are more liberal than those of almost any similar establishment in

Great Britain. The opportunity which the students at the University have of witnessing the practice of experienced physicians and surgeons is as ample as the *economy* of such a charity can possibly supply. Before any gentleman can apply for a degree of Doctor of Medicine, he must have attended the Infirmary for at least one session. Every opportunity for improvement is anxiously provided, and it must be ascribed to the scholar if he do not make great progress in the knowledge of diseases and the method of cure. The annual ticket is five guineas, and a perpetual ticket twelve guineas.

The admirable manner in which the medical arrangements in this department have been conducted, particularly in regard to what respects the accommodation of the students, has received the approbation of all competent judges. And it is universally allowed, that the high reputation of the University as a school of medicine has been in a great measure indebted to the Infirmary.

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No. V.

*Lying-in Hospital.*

The Lying-in Hospital was originally connected with the Infirmary. Dr. Young was the first professor of midwifery who proposed this additional opportunity of instruction, not only to the medical students attending the University, but to such females as propose to practise the art of midwifery. The rooms appropriated for this purpose were at first very few. Neither were they necessary to be upon a large scale, because in Scotland the practice was at that time almost entirely confined to females. A change of manners, as well as the beneficial effects which have resulted from the greater number of at least difficult cases being committed to the other sex, has enlarged in a great degree the views of mankind upon this sub-



ject. The Lying-in Hospital may therefore be considered as another excellent addition to the system of medical education to be obtained at Edinburgh. It was established in February 1791, for the purpose of affording relief to the wives of indigent tradesmen. Besides operating as a useful charity, the students of midwifery, upon taking out the requisite ticket, have ample opportunities of observing the practice of the professor, who is the ordinary physician of the Hospital.

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## No. VI.

*Public Dispensary.*

This institution owes its existence to the humane and indefatigable exertions of the late professor of the theory of physic, Dr. Andrew Duncan, senior. In the year 1776 he circulated a proposal for establishing at Edinburgh a Public Dispensary for the relief of the poor, when subjected to chronical or tedious diseases. He was then a private lecturer on medicine in Edinburgh. In order to aid the funds of the charity, as well as to increase the opportunities of improvement to students of medicine who repaired to Edinburgh for medical instruction, he proposed to deliver lectures on select cases, which might from time to time occur at the Dispensary. He met, however, with considerable opposition at first, particularly from the managers of the royal infirmary. By perseverance, and the real utility of the lectures, the prejudices which were harboured against it subsided. The Doctor continued to deliver clinical lectures upon cases which occurred in the dispensary until he was preferred to be a professor in the University. The lectures were well received by the students, but they have been discontinued for a good many years. The charity, however, still exists in vigour, and has been of great service to the public.

## No. VII.

*Museum of the University.*

The indefatigable exertions of Sir Andrew Balfour and Sir Robert Sibbald, to diffuse a taste for natural history throughout the country, and, in particular, to found a Museum in the University, have been mentioned in their proper places. But upon the death of the latter, little or no attention seems to have been paid to the subject for many years, and the specimens of natural history, which they had collected with incredible industry, and had generously bequeathed to the University lay neglected. There was not even a proper place set apart for the preservation of them. The consequence of which was, that many of them were abstracted. They were kept in no order, no list was made out of their number, nor was any arrangement adopted, excepting that of Sir Robert Sibbald, and even this was little regarded.

The popularity and eloquence of Buffon's great work produced a most sensible impression throughout the whole of Europe, and roused the attention of philosophers to a subject which had been too long neglected. Cabinets of natural curiosities began to be formed by men of fortune, and such as were amateurs of the science. These were enriched by the spirit of enterprize which so remarkably spread throughout Europe, about the same time, by laying under contribution the spoils which were brought home by the great multitude of travellers and navigators, who explored the most distant regions of the globe. Zoology, botany, and mineralogy, assumed the attitudes of science, and instead of being composed of a series of detached and insulated observations, method, and generalization, were introduced, by which means alone science can be improved.

The labours of the great Linnæus not only paved the way

but almost brought to perfection what was wanted to direct the course of succeeding philosophers, in extending our knowledge of the animal and vegetable kingdoms; and the gigantic strides which chemistry has made as a science within the last fifty years, have led to a more accurate arrangement in what regards the mineral kingdom.

Dr. Ramsay, who was the first professor of Natural History in the University of Edinburgh, severely felt the want of a museum. Sibbald's collection was almost entirely dissipated, and, even though it had been preserved more entire, could probably have been of little use to him, and this was one reason why he never taught a regular course.

When Dr. Walker succeeded to the professorship in 1779, he also strongly felt the disadvantages under which he laboured. Natural History had been the object of his peculiar attention from his earliest years; he had collected a considerable number of specimens before he began to lecture, and during the whole term of his professorship, he was constantly adding to them. At his death, however, they were all removed from the Museum. Those only which were the property of the University, remained, though, as I am informed, it was almost impossible to distinguish to whom they belonged.

One of the greatest benefactors to the Museum was the late Dr. William Thomson. He had received his medical education at Edinburgh, and was afterwards appointed professor of Anatomy at Oxford. He went abroad, and resided at Naples for a considerable time, but, in consequence of the invasion of Italy by the French, he removed to Palermo, where he died. He had been at great expense in forming the collection, and the different preparations are in excellent order.

Professor Jameson presented his own private collection to the Museum, and it ought to be recollected that it has been principally by means of his own exertions, that the present splendid repository of curiosities has been obtained.

contains some uncommonly fine specimens of rare ani-

Among many others may be mentioned a camcleopard,

which is of an extraordinary height. The collection of birds is very extensive. It is the third in Europe, only being exceeded by those of Paris and Berlin. There are upwards of three thousand different specimens. What greatly enhances the splendour of the sight is, that every individual throughout the whole kingdom, which the Museum contains, is in the highest state of preservation, no pains nor expense having been spared to accomplish the end in view. The professor has also studied to introduce scientific arrangement, which renders it more interesting to the philosopher, as well as more agreeable to the mere spectator. The collection of insects, shells, &c. is also extensive.

Professor Jameson, in his lectures, directs a great deal of attention to mineralogy. This is a study comparatively of a late date. He himself is a disciple of the celebrated Werner, under whom he studied, and whose leading doctrines he teaches. The specimens of mineralogy in his possession are very ample, and they are arranged according to the Wernerian system.

The architecture of that part of the College buildings, which he possesses, is much admired. It was designed by Adam and improved by Playfair. The accommodation and elegance of the suite of rooms in the interior are no where exceeded. Upon the whole, the Museum forms a splendid addition to the University, and is more worthy of being visited, than any thing of the kind which Scotland affords. The fee for admission is half a crown.

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No. VI

*Anatomical*

Beside the Museum of Natural History, of which an account has been already given, there is another

ments connected with the University that deserve particular notice. The first is the Anatomical Museum.

In the year 1800 Dr. Monro Secundus presented his own collection of anatomical preparations, together with that of his father, to the University, and in the following terms:—"I, Alexander Monro, Professor of Medicine, Anatomy, and Surgery, in the University of Edinburgh, hereby give and bequeath to the said University, for ever, my whole collection of anatomical preparations, with all the vessels and cabinets in which they are contained in the several rooms connected with the anatomical theatre, to be used by myself, and my eldest son, my colleague, during our lives, and after our decease by our future successors in office, for the purpose of demonstrating and explaining to the students of the University the structure, physiology, and diseases of the human body."

Of late years the specimens in this museum have been considerably increased. The new rooms are much calculated to exhibit them to advantage, and they are now open to the students and to the medical profession. The patrons have granted L.100 per annum for the support and extension of the museum, including the salary of the conservator. Upon the representation of the Senatus Academicus, they sanctioned, 28th June 1826, First, that L.1, 1s. be required of each candidate for graduation, it being at the same time understood, that if he pay the money on his first matriculation at the University, he shall be allowed a free entrance to the museum during the whole course of his studies; but that the regulation shall not operate retrospectively on students who have already begun their medical studies. Second, that no other students shall be compelled to contribute to the museum, but that tickets of admission shall be issued to all who wish for them, at seven shillings for the season, and that none but the students of Dr. Monro's class shall be admitted to the museum without such tickets.

Mr. Mackenzie, the Conservator, drew up a descriptive catalogue, which the Patrons ordered to be printed at their expense. The catalogue, it must be confessed, contains a

great variety of specimens. The list fills no fewer than 245 8vo. pages.

Dr. Monro has a separate museum belonging to himself, which also contains various specimens of different parts of the human body both in a sound and a diseased state. These when necessary are produced, and the students have an opportunity of examining them. So that superior opportunities of improving in the study of anatomy are no where to be obtained than at the University of Edinburgh.

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#### No. IX.

##### *Museum of Natural Philosophy.*

The second is under the care of Mr. Leslie, Professor of Natural Philosophy. In the very extensive range which he takes in his course, there is no doctrine which he does not illustrate by a series of the most apposite and ingenious experiments. The suite of rooms he occupies afford every convenience that can be desired, the illustrations which he is enabled to give by the uncommon extent of his apparatus is unexampled, and he contrives to render his class one of the most instructive and amusing in the College.

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#### No. X.

##### *Royal Medical Society.*

In enumerating the advantages which students of medicine possess at Edinburgh, it would be unpardonable not to mention that societies have for a very long period existed which

have for their objects the cultivation of medical and physical science in particular, though not to the exclusion of literary subjects, which are occasionally introduced.

The oldest and most distinguished of these institutions is the Royal Medical Society. It has existed since the year 1737, and is almost coeval with the foundation of a medical school in Edinburgh. It has contributed greatly to cherish a spirit of emulation among the medical students themselves, and the freedom with which the doctrines of the professors are canvassed, has acted as a powerful stimulus to exertion on their part. The most eminent practitioners in Europe, America, &c. have been members of this society, and acknowledged the advantages they have derived from it. The society meets once a week during the session of the college. The ordinary business consists in a paper being read by one of the members, the subject of which is left to his own discretion. This essay is engrossed in a book belonging to the society, and circulated among the members in rotation, who have thus an opportunity of making their remarks upon it at leisure. A question is next discussed which is opened by two of the members. As the rules of the society admit strangers upon being provided with a ticket, any gentleman is at liberty to deliver his sentiments.

The society is incorporated by royal charter. They built a hall, &c. for their accommodation, the foundation stone of which was laid in 1770 by the celebrated Dr. Cullen, when he was President of the Royal College of Physicians. A library is connected with the institution.

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#### *Royal Physical Society.*

The constitution of the Royal Physical Society is quite similar to that of the Medical. It only differs in this, that its regular topics of discussion embrace a greater variety of miscellaneous subjects.

## No. XI.

## BEQUEST BY GENERAL REID,

*To endow a Professorship of Music.*

General John Reid, of Woodstock Street, Oxford Street, London, was a native of Perthshire, and educated at the University of Edinburgh. He entered the army very early in life, and continued in it upwards of sixty years. He was a general in his Majesty's army, and colonel of the 88th regiment of foot, and had seen a great deal of service both in Europe and in America, where he possessed extensive estates, which were forfeited during the unfortunate contest with the colonies. He left one daughter, who was married to a Mr. Robertson, and in case of her having no children, he left all his property, which was very considerable, to the College of Edinburgh. The following extracts are from his will, dated 4th of March 1806. He died in the beginning of the year 1807.

“ My will and meaning is, that my said trustees shall stand possessed thereof upon trust, in the first place, for establishing and endowing a Professorship of Music in the College and University of Edinburgh, where I had my education, and spent the pleasantest part of my youth; and, in the next place, for the purpose also, after completing such endowments, as herein after is mentioned, in making additions to the library of the said University, or otherwise, in promoting the general interest and advantage of the University, in such way and manner as the Principal and Professors thereof for the time being shall, in their discretion, think most fit and proper. And in order properly to carry my will and intention in this respect into full effect, I direct my said trustees, and the survivors and survivor of them, and the executors and administrators of such survivor, to sell, lay out, transfer, assign, and otherwise dispose of my said last mentioned personal estate, at the sight, and with the privity and approbation of the Princi-



pal and Professors of the said University for the time being, as may be for that purpose deemed necessary, in such way and manner as will most effectually establish, and perpetually secure, a fund for the endowment of a Professorship of Music, as aforesaid, and the maintenance, in all time thereafter, in the said University of a Professor of the Theory of Music, an art and science in which the Scots stand unrivalled by all the neighbouring nations in pastoral melody, and sweet combination of sounds; and my will and meaning is, that, in the event of the establishment of such Professorship as aforesaid, the Principal and Professors of the said University do, and shall, within six months next after such an event shall have taken place, by a public Ordinance of the University, make a declaration of what, in their estimation, the annual and perpetual salary to be allowed to such Professor of Music ought to amount to, the sum not being less than L.300 of good and lawful money of Great Britain; and that upon such declaration being so made as aforesaid, and notice thereof in writing given to my said trustees, or to the survivors or survivor of them as aforesaid, and due provision made for securing the payment of such yearly salary, after the amount thereof has been ascertained, in the manner aforesaid; they my said trustees, or the survivors or survivor of them, or the executors or administrators of such survivors, shall and do, by such instrument or instruments as may, by the law of Scotland, be in such case requisite, make over the residue of my said last-mentioned personal estate, to the Principal and Professors of the said University, for the purposes aforesaid; and by the said instrument declare, that the power and right of presentation or nomination of such Professorship, and the superintendence, care, and management of the said fund, shall, on their decease, be vested in, and perpetually enjoyed in all time thereafter, by the Principal and Professors of the said University for the time being; and that in case of misbehaviour, or neglect properly to discharge his or their duty, on the part of any Professor or Professors of the Theory of Music, to be from time to time appointed as aforesaid, the Principal and Professors of the said University, for

the time being, or the major part of them, shall have power, in their discretion, to dismiss such Professor or Professors, and to elect another or others in his or their place, and generally to establish, from time to time, such rules and regulations, as may, in their opinion, contribute to give stability, respectability, and consequence to the establishment, and thereby carry my intentions into effect ; and as I am the last representative of an old family in Perthshire, which on my death will be extinct in the male line, I therefore leave two portraits of me, one when a Lieutenant in the Earl of Loudoun's regiment, raised in the year 1745, and the other when a Major-General in the army, to the Principal and Professors of the said University of Edinburgh, to be disposed of in such a manner as the Principal shall direct ; and to that University I wish prosperity to the end of time."

"After the decease of my daughter Susanna Robertson, she dying without issue, I have left all my property in the Funds, or in Great Britain, to the College of Edinburgh, where I had my education, as will be found more particularly expressed in my Will ; and as I leave all my music-books (particularly those of my own composition,) to the Professor of Music in that College, it is my wish, that in every year after his appointment, he will cause a Concert of Music to be performed on the the 13th of February, being my birth-day, in which shall be introduced one Solo for the German Flute, Hautboy, or Clarionet, also one March and Minuet, with accompaniments by a select Band, in order to show the taste of Music about the middle of last century, when they were by me composed, and with a view also to keep my memory in remembrance ; the expense attending the Concert to be defrayed from the general fund left by me to the College, and not from the salary to be paid to the Professor of Music, from which there is not to be any diminution. I wish to inform my executors, that I have made it a constant rule not to be in debt to any man ; and that it is my wish, that the amount of my property in the Funds, where the whole of it is invested, shall not be made public.

Having expressed in my Will, that I leave two portraits of me, one when a Lieutenant in the Earl of Loudoun's regiment, raised in the year 1745, and the other when a Major-General in the army, to the College of Edinburgh; and having arrived at the high rank of General in the army, it is my wish, that a portrait of me, which was painted last year, in the uniform of my regiment, (the 88th,) shall, with the other mentioned portraits, be sent at a proper time to the Principal and Professors of the College of Edinburgh, the expense of which, from my own funds, to be defrayed by my executors.

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## No XII.

*Speculative Society.*

The Speculative Society was instituted in the year 1764, by six young gentlemen who were then prosecuting their studies at the University. The celebrity of this institution, and the many eminent divines, illustrious statesmen, lawyers, and physicians, that have been members of the Speculative Society, and who, for the last fifty years, have made so distinguished a figure in almost every department of literature and science, throughout the British empire, render its history an object of singular curiosity and interest. While other similar institutions have been ephemeral, or at least have continued for a few years only, it early acquired reputation, and has continued to maintain it, notwithstanding, that it never possessed, nor even aspired to obtain royal favour, or to procure the benefit of a charter.

The names of the founders were Mr. John Bonar, Mr. Allan Maconochie, Mr. Alexander Belches, Mr. John M'Kenzie, Mr. William Creech, and Mr. John Bruce. The express object of their association was mutual improvement in the art of composition, and in the practice of public speaking. Some

of them were intended for the pulpit, and others for the bar, and they very properly conceived, that one of the best means for improvement in what was so essentially requisite to the honourable discharge of their several public functions in future life, was the preparatory exercises, of which the plan was sketched in the laws by which the Society was to be regulated. These laws were drawn up with skill, and are very creditable to the taste, good sense, and talents of the youthful founders. In the course of time, however, experience suggested various improvements, and the code of laws of the Society (which is printed,) exhibits an admirable model for similar institutions.

Soon after the institution of the Speculative Society, a space of ground, within the premises of the College, was granted, (21st June, 1769,) by the patrons of the University, on which the Society erected a Hall. This being removed in consequence of the improvements connected with the rebuilding of the College, a very elegant Hall and Library Room have been allotted to the Society, by the Patrons and Parliamentary Commissioners in lieu of it, in the east front; so that it may, in a manner, be considered as incorporated with the University itself. At the first meeting held in the new hall, the Principal of the University, an old member of the Society, presided, and delivered an introductory discourse, adapted to the felicitous occasion.

The Society meets at seven o'clock every Tuesday evening, during the session of the College. Five Presidents are chosen annually. After the President for the night has taken the chair, the roll is called—such ordinary members as are absent are noted—and the minutes of the former meeting are read by the secretary or his deputy—an essay upon some literary subject is then read, and this part of the business is taken in rotation by the ordinary members, according to their seniority on the roll. The subject is at the option of the author, but this must be declared, by the member who is to read it, two ordinary meetings previous to its being delivered. After it is delivered, its merits and demerits are freely canvassed, and

when the criticisms are concluded, the author, or his substitute, is at liberty to reply to the criticisms that have been made.

The essay for next night is then intimated. Resignations are accepted—and petitions for admission and extraordinary privileges are next received, read, and ballotted.

The Society then adjourn for a few minutes—and upon the President resuming the chair, the roll is called a second time, and, as in the call of the first roll, the ordinary members who are absent are noted.

The subject of debate appointed for the night is then announced, and also the names of the two gentlemen whose business it is to open it; both of whom, if they please, may provide substitutes. It may be proper to observe, that at the commencement of every session, a committee is appointed to propose subjects for debate, which are inserted in a register appropriated to that express purpose. The senior on the roll has his choice of the subject, and the junior, of the side he wishes to support. Those whose duty it is to open the question, shall give notice of it on the third ordinary meeting, previous to the debate. All the members have an opportunity of delivering their sentiments, and may espouse any side they may judge proper. At the conclusion, the question is put to the vote by dividing, and decided by the majority.

The question for next night's debate is then intimated, and by whom it is to be opened. ♣ Before dissolving the meeting, other private business is discussed, and then the roll is called a third and last time, when the Society adjourns.

The members are either honorary, extraordinary, or ordinary. No one can be admitted to either of the two first, unless he has attended regularly for three years, performed either personally, or by proxy, the different tasks assigned to him, or paid the fines imposed for not having done so.

No strangers are allowed to be present, or to witness the proceedings of the Society.

Upon the seventeenth of December, 1814, the completion of the fiftieth year since the institution of the Society, a general meeting was held at Fortune's Tavern, when nearly eighty

members assembled, some of whom had come from a distance, for the purpose of being present. Principal Baird was chairman, and Dr. Gregory, and Sir Walter Scott, croupiers. Some of the most distinguished characters in the country were assembled. The meeting presented the utmost harmony and conviviality, and it may be truly said, that perhaps there never was a meeting of the same number that concentrated so much talent, literary, political and scientific.

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No. XIII.

*List of Principals and Professors of the University of  
Edinburgh, from 1756 to 1829.*

PRINCIPALS.

Dr. William Robertson,	. . . . .	1762
Dr. George H. Baird,	. . . . .	1793

PROFESSORS.

Thomas Young, Midwifery,	. . . . .	1756
Adam Ferguson, Natural Philosophy,	. . . . .	1759
————— Moral Philosophy,	. . . . .	1769
Hugh Blair, Rhetoric and Belles Lettres,	. . . . .	1760
John Hope, Botany and Materia Medica,	. . . . .	1761
Robert Cumming, Church History,	. . . . .	1762
James Balfour, Law of Nature and Nations,	. . . . .	1764
James Russell, Natural Philosophy,	. . . . .	1764
William Cullen, Institutes of Medicine,	. . . . .	1766
————— Practice of Medicine,	. . . . .	1773
John Gregory, Practice of Physic,	. . . . .	1766
Joseph Black, Chemistry,	. . . . .	1766
Francis Home, Materia Medica,	. . . . .	1768
Andrew Dalzell, Greek,	. . . . .	1772

John Bruce, Logic,	1774
John Robison, Natural Philosophy,	1774
Dugald Stewart, Mathematics,	1775
———— Moral Philosophy,	1785
John Hill, Latin,	1775
James Gregory, Institutes of Medicine,	1778
———— Practice of Physic,	1790
Andrew Hunter, Divinity,	1779
Allan Maconochie, Law of Nature and Nations,	1779
John Walker, Natural History,	1779
Alexander Fraser Tytler, Universal History,	1780
Alexander Hamilton, Midwifery,	1780
John Playfair, Mathematics,	1785
———— Natural Philosophy,	1805
David Hume, Scots Law,	1786
Daniel Rutherford, Botany,	1786
Robert Blair, Practical Astronomy,	1786
James Finlayson, Logic,	1786
Thomas Hardie, Church History,	1788
Andrew Duncan, Institutes of Medicine,	1790
Andrew Coventry, Agriculture,	1790
John Wylde, Civil Law,	1792
Thomas Charles Hope, Chemistry,	1795
Robert Hamilton, Public Law,	1796
James Home, Materia Medica,	1798
———— Practice of Physic,	1821
Alexander Monro, Anatomy and Surgery,	1798
Hugh Meiklejohn, Church History,	1799
Alexander Irving, Civil Law,	1800
James Hamilton, Midwifery,	1800
William Fraser Tytler, Universal History,	1801
Andrew Brown, Rhetoric and Belles Lettres,	1801
James Russell, Clinical Surgery,	1803
Robert Jameson, Natural History,	1804
John Leslie, Mathematics,	1805
———— Natural Philosophy,	1819

George Dunbar, Greek, . . . . .	1805
Alexander Christison, Latin, . . . . .	1806
John Thomson, Military Surgery, . . . . .	1806
Andrew Duncan, Junior, Medical Jurisprudence, . . . . .	1807
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conjoined with his father,	
Theory of Physic, . . . . .	1819
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Materia Medica, . . . . .	1821
David Ritchie, Logic, . . . . .	1808
William Ritchie, Divinity, . . . . .	1809
Thomas Brown, Moral Philosophy, . . . . .	1810
Alexander Murray, Hebrew and Chaldee, . . . . .	1812
Alexander Brunton, Hebrew and Chaldee, . . . . .	1813
William Wallace, Mathematics, . . . . .	1819
William Pulteney Alison, Medical Jurisprudence, . . . . .	1819
<hr/>	
conjoined with Dr. Duncan,	
Senior, Theory of Physic, . . . . .	1821
Robert Graham, Botany, . . . . .	1820
John Wilson, Moral Philosophy, . . . . .	1820
James Pillans, Latin, . . . . .	1820
Sir W. Hamilton, Universal History, . . . . .	1821
James Home, Practice of Physic, . . . . .	1821
George Joseph Bell, Scots Law, . . . . .	1822
Robert Christison, Medical Jurisprudence, . . . . .	1822
George Ballingall, Military Surgery, . . . . .	1823
Macvey Napier, Conveyancing, . . . . .	1825
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